ASPECTS OF FRENCH IMMERSION AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS

Evaluation of the Second Language Learning (French) Programs in the Schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education,

Twelfth Annual Report

F. MORRISON, Principal Investigator
C. PAWLEY
R. BONYUN
J. UNITT

This research project was funded under contract by the Ministry of Education, Ontario.

It reflects the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Ministry.

The Honourable Sean Conway, Minister
Bernard J. Shapiro, Deputy Minister

Ministry of Education
Ontario

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ABSTRACT

The four clauses of the 1985 contract with the Ministry of Education dealt with (a) the French proficiency of immersion students in the K-74 cohort at the Grade 10 level; (b) assessment of the French proficiency of those who had remained in immersion only to the end of Grade 8; (c) the tracing of K-71 students after their completion of grades 12 or 13; and (d) students in the Ottawa and Carleton Boards who transfer from immersion to the English program before the end of Grade 3.

The K-74 Cohort at the Grade 10 Level

Grade 10 students who had enrolled in early-entry immersion in 1974 or joined the late-entry group at the Grade 6 or Grade 7 level were identified in the Carleton and Ottawa Boards. Several tests of French proficiency which had been taken by an earlier group were administered in the spring of 1985 to those in the Grade 10 bilingual program. The main purpose was to compare these students with an earlier group (K-71), which was thought to be atypical in aptitude and motivation. There had been significant differences between early- and late-entry immersion students in the earlier cohort, but in the K-74 group the only such difference found was on a measure of fluency in speaking. There was also a gradual increase over a four-year period in the mean scores at the Grade 10 level for late-entry students and a decrease for those in the early-entry program. These trends may reflect gradual changes taking place in the groups enrolled in these programs.

Former Immersion Students at the Grade 10 Level

Arrangements for testing a representative sample of these students were difficult, since they were widely scattered, but about 60 were located and took two group tests. For those tested, there tended to be a difference in favour of former students in the early-entry program. The mean score on one test was significantly greater than that on a similar test taken in Grade 8, suggesting a continued increase in proficiency after leaving immersion.

The K-71 Cohort in 1985

To prepare for post-secondary tracing of the K-71 cohort, about 83 per cent of those still in the system were located and asked about their post-secondary plans, as well as for a permanent address to be used to reach them later. Nearly 45 per cent of those remaining in the area who had entered an immersion program had remained in a bilingual program to Grade 12 or Grade 13.

When Primary Students Transfer

Questionnaires were sent to parents of 437 children still in the Ottawa-Carleton area who had left immersion during kindergarten or the primary grades between September 1983 and June

1985. These children represented from 5 to 10 per cent of the total immersion enrolment in the two boards. About 45 per cent of parents returned questionnaires.

Questionnaires were also completed by both the immersion and English program teachers for children who had transferred during the current academic year (1984-85). Interviews were held with 21 principals from Ottawa Board schools with a relatively high proportion of children in the target group.

Parents said that at time of transfer the children were having difficulty in immersion and exhibiting a negative attitude towards school, but most saw a significant improvement in academic progress and attitude after the child's transfer. Placement of the child at an appropriate grade level, provision of emotional support and academic assistance, and overcoming lack of self-confidence and a feeling of having failed were all aspects of the adjustment process mentioned by respondents from all groups. Many individuals made useful suggestions for modifying the decision-making and transition processes for children who transfer from French immersion to the English program.

INTRODUCTION

Under a series of contracts with the Ministry of Education, two groups of students have been traced as they progressed through the schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education. The school and grade location of the students in both cohorts has been monitored annually. One group, known as the K-71 cohort, had entered kindergarten in 1971 and had been in early- or late-entry immersion programs at the elementary level, or in an English program in the same schools; those who continued in the high school bilingual program typically took at least 10 courses in French during that time. A second group, the K-74 cohort, had followed similar programs starting in 1974. The majority of students in the K-71 cohort had reached Grade 13 in the spring of 1985, when most of the K-74 cohort was completing Grade 10.

Several tests of French proficiency were given to immersion students in the K-71 cohort at the end of Grade 8, Grade 10, and Grade 12, as well as to several other groups in later years. However, the French proficiency of the K-74 cohort has not been examined in as much detail as that of the K-71 group. These students did take one test in French at the end of Grade 8 as part of a local testing program, and testing them at the Grade 10 level has made possible a replication of some of the previous studies and a comparison of results obtained for the two cohorts.

The K-74 group may not have been influenced as much by the novelty and experimental aspects of the program in its early years. This cohort is also a larger group and may be more representative of the enrolment in later years in terms of aptitude and motivation.

The continuing process of tracing students in the immersion programs has made it possible to identify and locate children who have left the program. By the time the K-71 students reached their tenth year in school, 108 of those who were still in the system had transferred to the English program. Among those transferred during the kindergarten years, or after completing Grade 2 in immersion, about 30 per cent were below the expected grade level. However, about half of the 27 children who transferred during Grade 1 or 2 were in Grade 7 or 8 instead of Grade 9 in the fall of 1980. These findings and the concern of parents about the prospects of success for their children at the time they decide to enrol them in French immersion makes it important to examine the transfer process and perhaps to reconsider some aspects of the procedures presently being followed.

The scope of the research included in the 1985 contract with the Ministry of Education consists of (a) testing of the French proficiency of immersion students in the K-74 cohort at the Grade 10 level; (b) comparing results for former immersion students from this cohort with those of the bilingual-program group; (c) further tracing of French immersion students in the K-71 cohort in preparation for a post-secondary follow-up of these students; and (d) a follow-up study of French immersion students who transferred to English programs before the end of Grade 3.

THE K-74 COHORT AT THE GRADE 10 LEVEL

PROCEDURES

Programs and Groups Studied

In Ottawa, graduates from both the early- and the late-entry immersion programs, along with some other students from a variety of backgrounds, may attend three secondary schools which offer a bilingual program. The majority of the nine Carleton Board schools which offer a bilingual program at the Grade 10 level also have classes appropriate for both the early- and late-entry streams. Most students in these programs had taken a total of six to eight courses in French in Grades 9 and 10.

The cumulative amount of instructional time in French for early-entry students at the Grade 10 level in the K-74 cohort in Ottawa and Carleton schools was similar, averaging from 6000 to 6500 hours. For the late-entry students at Grade 10, the cumulative time was about 2800 hours in the Carleton schools and 3400 hours in Ottawa schools. The difference between the cumulative times for the two late-entry groups occurred in part because the Ottawa late-entry students had received 40 minutes of French per day throughout elementary school, while this particular group in Carleton had received 20 minutes of French daily until they reached Grade 5. Appendix A contains a table showing the amount of time spent in French at each grade level and the average cumulative time for each type of immersion group reaching Grade 10 by the fall of 1984.

All bilingual-program groups at Grade 10 in both boards were tested. In the Ottawa Board 13 classes in three schools were involved, while in the Carleton Board there were 27 classes in the nine schools offering the program. Students were usually included in the early-entry analysis groups if they had been in immersion since Grade 4 or earlier, while the late-entry analysis groups included those who had experienced the full program in Ottawa or Carleton. In addition, the students included in the analyses had taken at least six courses in French at the high school level; any who had had some unusual opportunity for learning French outside of school were excluded. Table 1 shows the number of students in the analysis groups, which is considerably smaller than the total number in the classes tested; absenteeism on the day of testing also led to the exclusion of the students who would otherwise have been in the analysis groups.

In addition to the students referred to in Table 1 it was possible to identify a group of former immersion students. These students had been in an immersion program to the end of Grade 8 but had not continued in a bilingual program in Grade 9 or later. It was decided to test any such students attending one of the schools offering a bilingual program and also those at any other school where there were at least three former immersion students at the Grade 10 level. Of the 109 former immersion students located in these schools, a total of 61 were included in the test sessions.

TABLE 1

BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS TESTED: GRADE 10,
OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group		Number of students	Total
Early-entry	Ottawa	108	
	Carleton	208	
			316
Late-entry	Ottawa	48	
	Carleton	153	
			201
Other	Ottawa	124	
	Carleton	148	
			272
Total in program	Ottawa	280	
	Carleton	509	
			789

Instruments

Most of the tests of French proficiency administered to the students from the K-74 cohort in the spring of 1985 had been administered to Grade 10 groups in earlier years, particularly in 1982, when the K-71 cohort had been in Grade 10. The students also completed a short questionnaire asking about their backgrounds with respect to the French language. This information was used to assign students to the analysis groups used for making comparisons. The tests used consisted of the following:

Test de français, Secondaire IV - This test had been given to Grade 10 early- and late-entry students in 1981 and 1982, and another level of the same series was used with late-entry students in 1980.

Test de mots à trouver, Niveau C - This cloze-type test had been used with Grade 10 students with both early- and late-entry immersion backgrounds in 1981 and 1982.

Speaking test (Structures) - This test was developed in the Ottawa Board for use in 1982 and 1984.

Speaking test (Fluency) - The scoring procedures for this test were developed and used successfully with Grade 12 in 1984, but different stimuli were used for Grade 10.

Additional details concerning each of these tests will be found in the section giving the 1985 results on each in turn, and results of the earlier testing will also be included where relevant.

Scores were also available for three subtests of the Differential Aptitude Test (Psychological Corporation, 1966), which had been given at the Grade 9 level in both Ottawa and

Carleton schools. These results could be used as appropriate for adjusting the mean scores of groups being compared.

ANALYSES

Analyses of Variance

Initially the basic statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequencies were obtained for each test or subtest. Analyses of variance, followed by Scheffé post hoc procedures as necessary, were performed for each set of statistics to determine whether differences among the groups were statistically significant.

Scholastic aptitude. For each of the aptitude tests, the means and standard deviations were obtained for the various analysis groups, as shown in Table 2. For each test an analysis of variance showed a significant difference among the groups. In Verbal Reasoning the Ottawa late-entry group had the highest mean score, which was significantly greater than that of the Carleton early-entry group. There were also significant differences among the groups on both the Numerical Ability and the Abstract Reasoning tests, on which the Carleton late-entry group had the highest mean score. This was the first time statistically significant differences in aptitude had shown up in Research Centre studies among various groups of students still in an immersion or bilingual program at any grade level in the Carleton and Ottawa Boards of Education.

TABLE 2

MEAN APTITUDE TEST SCORES: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Group	Verbal Reasoning			Numerical Ability			Abstract Reasoning		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Early-entry									
Ottawa	29.0	8.3	100	26.7	6.4	100	35.2	4.4	103
Carleton	26.3	8.0	184	28.1	6.1	185	36.6	5.5	182
Late-entry									
Ottawa	31.0*	9.3	47	29.1	5.3	47	35.6	5.2	47
Carleton	28.6	9.5	144	29.9*	5.9	147	37.3*	4.2	145

* Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the early-entry group in the other board ($p < 0.05$)

Analysis of Covariance

Since there were differences in ability among the subgroups, an analysis of covariance was carried out to control statistically for these differences. To decide which of the three subtests of the DAT would best serve as a covariate, Pearson product-moment correlations were computed between each of the three DAT subtests and each test of proficiency. As had been found before (Morrison et al., 1983), the Verbal Reasoning subtest showed the highest correlation coefficients with eight of the nine French proficiency measures and in all cases the correlation coefficients were significant ($p < 0.05$), ranging from 0.23 to 0.48. For the other two ability measures the range of correlation coefficients was from 0.04 to 0.36 and not all of these were statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

RESULTS

Test of French Reading and Language Usage

Description of the test. The Test de français is a series of tests developed in Quebec to measure reading and language usage skills for the francophone students in that province. The test for the Secondaire IV level was intended for use with students in the fourth year of the five-year secondary sequence in Quebec. Only the last 60 items, which dealt with paragraph completion, vocabulary, and identification of spelling and grammatical errors, were administered to Ottawa and Carleton students in 1985. In earlier years, these or other sections of this level of the test had been administered to groups of bilingual-program students in Grades 10 through 12.

Most of the Ottawa Board students tested had taken the Secondaire I level of the Quebec tests when they were in Grade 8. This 35-item test is designed for Quebec francophone students in the first year of the secondary sequence. The scores provided a basis for comparison of groups of immersion students as they were at the Grade 8 level. In addition, the testing done in 1982 permitted the equating of scores between levels of the Test de français, using the equipercentile method, and hence allowed for comparisons of the growth made by the various groups.

Comparisons among Grade 10 groups. The results of the Test de français, Secondaire IV, for the Grade 10 groups from each board are presented in Table 3, together with means adjusted for differences in verbal aptitude among the groups. There were no statistically significant differences among the results of the early- and late-entry groups shown. The results of the group of students who did not meet the criteria for inclusion into one of the analysis groups shown also showed no significant differences from the other groups, even after adjustment for such differences in ability.

TABLE 3

TEST DE FRANÇAIS IV TOTAL SCORE ADJUSTED FOR DIFFERENCES IN VERBAL REASONING: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group	Français IV, Total Score (Max. 60)			
	Adj. Mean	Unadj. Mean	SD	N
Early-entry				
Ottawa	23.9	23.7	6.2	98
Carleton	24.1	23.7	5.9	169
Late-entry				
Ottawa	24.8	25.2	6.9	47
Carleton	23.3	23.9	6.9	135
Others				
Ottawa	25.0	24.5	6.5	78
Carleton	24.0	23.9	5.8	87

Table 4 presents the part scores adjusted for differences in verbal reasoning ability in the same way, along with the unadjusted mean for each group. For none of the part scores was there any significant difference among the mean scores for the various groups.

Comparison with francophone norms. It is possible to compare the subtest scores shown in Table 4 with those achieved by the Quebec francophone norming group at secondaire IV (Grade 10). In the 'paragraphes' subtest, the means of the primary- and late-entry groups from each board all fell between the 30th and 40th percentiles. In other words, for groups with the highest mean score the average student has a score which is higher than that of almost 40 per cent of the francophone students. On both the vocabulary and spelling subtests the mean scores fell between the 20th and the 30th percentiles for this norm group. The table of percentile equivalents will be found in Appendix B.

TABLE 4

TEST DE FRANÇAIS IV PART SCORES ADJUSTED FOR DIFFERENCES IN VERBAL REASONING: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group	N	Paragraphes (Max. 15)			Vocabulaire (Max. 15)			Orthographe (Max. 30)		
		Adj.	Unadj.	SD	Adj.	Unadj.	SD	Adj.	Unadj.	SD
Early-entry										
Ottawa	98	6.5	6.6	2.2	6.2	6.3	2.6	10.5	10.6	3.6
Carleton	169	6.3	6.2	2.4	6.6	6.4	2.4	11.3	11.2	3.5
Late-entry										
Ottawa	47	6.3	6.5	1.8	6.7	7.1	2.9	11.2	11.6	4.0
Carleton	135	6.2	6.3	2.2	6.1	6.2	2.8	11.3	11.4	3.7
Others										
Ottawa	78	6.9	6.8	2.3	6.9	6.7	2.7	11.1	10.9	3.9
Carleton	87	6.1	6.1	2.4	6.5	6.4	2.3	11.5	11.4	3.3

Comparison with Grade 10 groups of previous years. The main comparison to be made with earlier results was that with the results of the testing done with the Grade 10 bilingual-program group tested in the spring of 1982. That group was known as the K-71 cohort and the students in it, who had been followed throughout their school careers, included the first sizeable group of early-entry immersion students to reach this level. However, it was also possible to compare the 1985 results with those of grade 10 groups tested in 1981. The results of these comparisons are all shown in Table 5. Since aptitude test data were not available for all of the earlier groups, it was not possible to make corrections for differences in aptitude.

TABLE 5

TEST DE FRANÇAIS IV: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1981, 1982, AND 1985

Group	Paragraphes		Vocabulaire		Orthographe		Total		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	N
From early-entry									
Ottawa 1981	6.2	2.2	6.8*	2.9	12.4*	4.3	25.4	7.3	29
Ottawa 1982	6.4	2.2	5.9	2.4	10.4	3.9	22.8	6.3	79
Ottawa 1985	6.6	2.2	6.3	2.6	10.6	3.7	23.6	6.3	108
Carleton 1981	7.0*	2.9	7.6	2.8	13.3	5.1	27.9*#	8.9	40
Carleton 1982	6.6	2.6	6.8	3.0	12.8	3.8	26.2	6.5	22
Carleton 1985	6.4	2.4	6.5	2.4	11.4	3.6	24.2	6.3	206
From late-entry									
Ottawa 1981	5.3	2.2	5.0	2.9	9.4	3.8	19.7	6.4	61
Ottawa 1982	6.0	2.3	6.2	2.5	9.4	3.8	21.6	6.3	45
Ottawa 1985	6.6	1.8	7.1	2.8	11.5	4.0	25.2	7.0	49
Carleton 1981	5.6	1.8	6.4	2.2	9.9	3.8	21.9	5.4	61
Carleton 1982	6.1	2.4	5.9	2.3	10.4	3.0	22.4	5.2	66
Carleton 1985	6.2	2.2	6.1	2.8	11.4	3.6	23.7	6.7	147

* Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the late-entry group in the same board in the same year ($p < 0.05$)

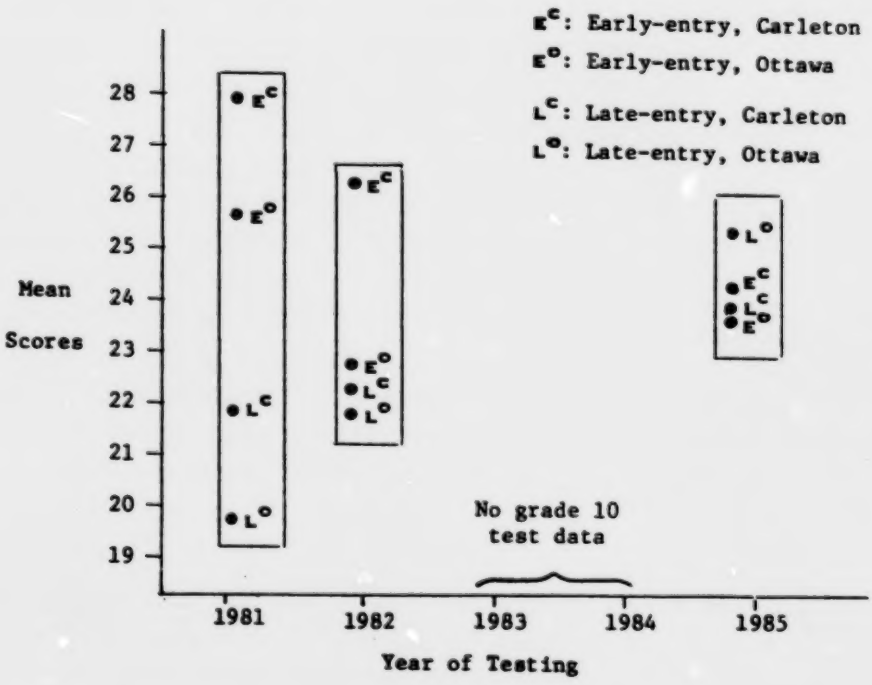
\# Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the other groups in the same program in the same board ($p < 0.05$)

On the Test de français, Secondaire IV, the only significant differences between the early- and late-entry groups of the same board occurred in 1981. While the mean scores for the late-entry groups tended to increase during the period under consideration, those of the early-entry groups showed a tendency to decrease. Hence the differences between early- and late-entry groups also decreased in most cases. Figure 1 shows graphically the changes in the mean scores of these groups for the three test occasions.

FIGURE 1

TEST DE FRANÇAIS: SECONDAIRE IV:

GRADE 10, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1981, 1982, AND 1985



Comparison with Grade 8 scores. Since the majority of the Ottawa Grade 10 students tested in the spring of 1985 had taken the Test de français, Secondaire I, in the spring of 1983 at the end of Grade 8, a comparison between their group results in Grades 8 and 10 was possible. When the groups were tested in 1983, the early-entry immersion students had a significantly higher mean score on the Test de français than those in the late-entry program. Table 6 shows the Grade 8 results for the total groups tested in 1983, as well as for those subgroups tested again in 1985. For those students who remained in the program to Grade 10 in Ottawa, there was no significant difference among the groups in their results on the Grade 8 test.

The difference in the size of the groups tested in 1983 and 1985 was partly because some students left the program as they entered high school or moved out of the area. A few others who were still in the program in 1985 were not included in the testing for one of the reasons mentioned earlier. However, it does appear that the groups are more similar to each other at the Grade 10 level than they were in Grade 8. One possible explanation is that the students who left the late-entry program between Grade 8 and Grade 10 were those with lower test scores, making the Grade 10 groups more similar with respect to their French proficiency.

TABLE 6

TEST DE FRANÇAIS I: GRADE 8 EARLY- AND LATE-ENTRY IMMERSION GROUPS, OTTAWA, 1983

Group	Français I (Max. 35)			
	Adj. Mean	Unadj. Mean	SD	N
Total 1983 group				
Early-entry	n/a	21.0*	4.6	179
Late entry	n/a	19.1	4.4	76
Those tested again in 1985				
Early-entry	20.9	20.8	4.0	87
Late-entry	20.2	20.6	4.0	46

* Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the late-entry group ($p < 0.01$)

It was also possible to compare the results for students who took both the Test de français, Secondaire I in Grade 8 and the level for Secondaire IV in Grade 10. Equipercentile methods were used to convert both sets of scores to the Secondaire III level (Morrison et al., 1982, p. 17). Table 7 shows the converted scores for this group of students on the two tests.

TABLE 7

TEST DE FRANÇAIS SCORES CONVERTED TO SECONDAIRE III: GRADES 8 AND 10, OTTAWA, 1983 AND 1985

Group	N	Grade 8 score		Grade 10 score	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Early-entry	93	19.0	3.9	22.3*	4.9
Late-entry	46	18.7	3.8	24.3*	5.8

* Mean significantly greater than Grade 8 score for the same group ($p < 0.05$)

The difference between the mean scores of the early- and late-entry groups was not significant at either grade level. However, the scores for both program groups at Grade 10 were each significantly greater than those for the same group at the Grade 8 level. In other words, significant gains had been made by both groups since Grade 8.

Cloze Test

The Test de mots à trouver, Niveau C, is a 25-minute test of French competency which was developed at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education for use with immersion classes. It is a cloze-type test which has been found to be a good measure of global language proficiency. The test consists of a text of about 300 words in which every seventh word is omitted; students are to supply the 50 missing words and write them in the blanks provided. In the acceptable word method of scoring such a test, a mark is given for any suitable word, while in the exact word method credit is only given for the precise word found in the original text. All scores presented in this report are based on the exact word method, which has been found to provide results which correlate highly with those obtained by the other method.

The cloze test was the second test used in the spring of 1985 to replicate the testing done with earlier Grade 10 groups. Table 8 gives the results, adjusted for differences in verbal reasoning ability, and also the unadjusted results for the four analysis groups and for students not included in these groups. There were no significant differences among either the adjusted or the unadjusted mean scores.

TABLE 8

TEST DE MOTS À TROUVER: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group	Test de mots à trouver (Max. 50)			
	Adj. Mean	Unadj. Mean	SD	N
Early-entry				
Ottawa	32.1	32.3	4.7	98
Carleton	31.8	31.6	3.7	171
Late-entry				
Ottawa	32.1	32.6	4.5	46
Carleton	31.1	31.2	3.7	139
Others				
Ottawa	32.3	32.1	4.6	78
Carleton	32.3	32.1	3.7	87

Although the cloze test was not one of the instruments administered at the Grade 10 level in 1982, this test had been used with similar groups in 1981, the first year that there were early-entry immersion students at that level in sufficient numbers to warrant testing. It had been felt at that time that this early group might have been particularly strong and therefore unrepresentative of such later groups. The small groups of the first early-entry immersion

students to reach Grade 10 had significantly higher scores on this test than the late-entry groups from the same boards.

The 1981 and 1985 results for early- and late-entry immersion in the two boards are shown in Table 9. As for the Test de français, the early-entry groups had higher scores in 1981 than in 1985, while the 1985 late-entry groups had higher scores. These differences were significant for early-entry in Carleton and for late-entry in Ottawa. Figure 2 presents the data of Table 9 graphically.

TABLE 9

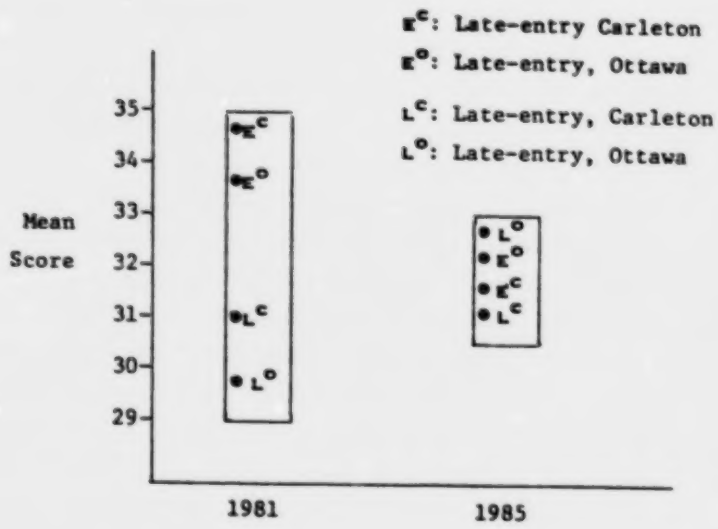
TEST DE MOTS À TROUVER: GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1981 AND 1985

Group and Year		Test de mots à trouver (Max. 50)		
		Mean	SD	N
Early-entry				
Ottawa	1981	33.4*	5.2	33
	1985	32.3	4.7	98
Carleton	1981	34.7*	3.7	43
	1985	31.6	3.7	171
Late-entry				
Ottawa	1981	29.7	4.6	61
	1985	32.6	4.5	46
Carleton	1981	31.0	4.7	61
	1985	31.2	3.7	139

* Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the late-entry group in same board in the same year ($p < 0.05$)

FIGURE 2

TEST DE MOTS À TROUVER:
GRADE 10, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1981 AND 1985



French Speaking Test (Structures)

Subsamples from each of the four analysis groups took an individual two-part French speaking test which was administered and scored by a trained francophone tester. Although the 10-minute test session was taped, it was usually possible to complete the scoring at the time of testing. The two parts of the test were administered in the spring of 1985 to random samples from Grade 10 early- and late-entry immersion students in both Ottawa and Carleton.

Part I (Structures) was the same test used with Grade 8 and 10 students in immersion or bilingual programs three years earlier. Each one of the 22 questions was designed to elicit a specific structure. An attempt was made to phrase the question so that other responses were unlikely, and use of the structure itself or an associated one was avoided in the question. In some cases, if the expected response was not forthcoming, the tester was instructed to follow the question with one or more others.

For example, the following questions were used to elicit the use of the pronoun 'les' to replace the repetition of the noun as direct object:

À quel endroit achètes-tu tes livres?
À quel endroit fais-tu tes devoirs?
À quel endroit prends-tu tes repas?

This strategy was not always successful, and occasionally a student who did not respond appropriately to one item was found to use that structure in a different context.

In scoring this first part of the test, only the structure in question was scored, regardless of the accuracy of the overall response in which it was located. In the occasional case when a student used an accurate and appropriate structure, even though it was not the anticipated one, it was scored as correct. Often such a structure was of a more advanced form than the expected one. For example, a student might say 'Ils sont en train de lire' instead of 'ils lisent'. For each item a score of 2 was given for the required structure properly used, and 0 if it was not correct. A score of 1 was reserved for those structures which were composed of several elements and where it was possible to be partially correct.

Table 10 presents the 1985 results of the Structures test for the early- and late-entry students in the two boards, both separately and together. None of the differences between the two groups was significant. In 1982, however, the early-entry group had a mean score on this test which was significantly higher than that of the late-entry group.

TABLE 10

FRENCH SPEAKING TEST (STRUCTURES): GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group	French Speaking Test (Structures)		
	Mean	SD	N
Ottawa and Carleton early-entry	27.3	5.2	61
Ottawa and Carleton late-entry	25.3	6.0	42
Ottawa early-entry	28.1	4.4	24
Ottawa late-entry	27.6	5.1	10
Carleton early-entry	26.7	5.6	37
Carleton late-entry	24.6	6.2	32

Table 11 shows the item results for both the 1982 and 1985 early- and late-entry groups on the 22 structures tested. For both years the comparable Ottawa and Carleton groups have been combined to provide larger groups for comparison between early- and late-entry immersion. The item results were generally quite similar to those of 1982. Caution must, however, be used in comparing the results for the two years, since different testers were used and there is some evidence that they may have differed in their methods of eliciting responses and perhaps also in the scoring procedures used for certain items. This appears to have been part of the cause of the very low proportion of correct responses for item 21 among the 1985 early-entry students. If the test is to be used again, additional work needs to be done to standardize the elicitation and scoring procedures, so that comparisons may be more readily made.

There were several items on which the 1985 groups did less well than those who took the test in 1982 and a few cases where there was an especially large difference between early- and late-entry immersion groups. Examples are the use of the conditional (item 17) and in the correct use of 'chercher' (item 21). The results indicate the need for additional data related to these differences.

Both groups tended to be strongest on the same items: the three involving the use of the negative (items 8, 9, and 16), the distinction between 'bon' and 'bien' (item 10), and one in which students needed to use 'au cinema' (item 21), all of which were correctly answered by over 80 per cent of the students tested.

Other items caused difficulty for students in both immersion programs and in both years; sometimes this may have been because of difficulty in finding a way to elicit a particular structure, as in the case of the use of 'les' as a pronoun. The use of the subjunctive and of several pronouns ('y', 'en', 'les') were involved in the items answered correctly by less than 20 per cent of each group. Other items in the Structures test were of moderate difficulty.

'J'ai ... ans.' On the first question more than half the early-entry and more than three-quarters of the late-entry students responded correctly, giving their age. Most of the students who answered incorrectly said 'je suis' instead of 'j'ai', and some also said 'mon âge est ...'.

Past tense of verbs with 'être' (Items 2, 7). By asking in item 2 what the student had done after hearing the alarm ring that morning, it was hoped the student would respond using a reflexive verb. If necessary, further questions were asked to try to elicit this structure. Although in 1982 nearly 30 per cent more of the early-entry immersion students than of the late-entry ones had responded correctly, the difference in the proportions of these groups giving the desired response in 1985 had decreased to about 10 per cent.

The first person singular of a verb ('partir') requiring the use of 'être' in the past tense (item 7) was used correctly in 1985 by 59 per cent of the late-entry group; however, only 43 per cent of the early-entry group in 1985 and about the same proportion of both groups in 1982 answered this item correctly. Many of the incorrect responses were 'j'ai parti' or 'je me suis parti'.

Present and future indicative (Items 3, 15, 19, 22). The first person singular of the futur or futur proche was to be used in item 3, although a specific verb was not required. More than half of each group responded appropriately in item 3, and about the same proportion of the early immersion group did so for item 19 on which 'j'irai' was the correct response. Fewer of the late-entry group, however, responded correctly to this latter item. Many of those whose answers were incorrect had a third person ending with the future stem, or used the imparfait instead of the future.

Item 15 required the use of 'remettre' in the future tense and tended to be answered correctly by about a third of the students. Less than half of each group gave the third person plural of 'lire' in the present tense correctly (item 22). Many of those who did not respond correctly said, 'ils lient'.

TABLE 11

FRENCH SPEAKING TEST (STRUCTURES) ITEM ANALYSIS:
GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1982 AND 1985

Item		Per cent responding correctly			
		Early		Late	
	1985	1982 (N=61)	1985 (N=47)	1982 (N=42)	(N=59)
1.	'J'ai ... ans'	57	53	77	66
2.	'Passé composé' of reflexive verb	54	74	41	46
3.	'Futur' or 'futur proche'	54	57	59	58
4.	Use of 'en' as pronoun	16	11	18	15
5.	Use of 'y' as pronoun	3	2	11	7
6.	Use of 'les' as pronoun	8	14	18	10
7.	'Passé composé' of verb with 'être'	43	43	59	41
8.	Use of negative ('ne ... pas')	85	89	82	78
9.	Use of negative ('ne ... jamais')	65	72	43	41
10.	Use of 'bon' vs 'bien'	91	85	86	80
11.	Use of 'connaître' vs 'savoir'	41	45	27	32
12.	Use of 'depuis' with time	26	32	11	31
13.	Use of 'en' with date	68	87	73	69
14.	'Impératif' of 'aller', second person plural	51	57	55	54
15.	'Futur' of 'remettre'	35	30	32	15
16.	Use of negative ('personne')	96	96	80	88
17.	'Conditionnel' of 'laver'	68	83	39	14
18.	'Subjonctif' of 'être', second person plural	3	19	2	15
19.	'Futur' of 'aller', first person singular	50	60	45	41
20.	Use of 'au' as preposition	78	83	80	81
21.	Use of 'chercher'	26	85	45	83
22.	'Présent' of 'lire', third person plural	47	57	41	49

Note: It must be remembered that caution needs to be exercised when comparing the results of the two years. Different testers were used and the test procedures have not yet been revised on the basis of the experience to date.

French Speaking Test (Fluency)

This part of the speaking test was intended to test the fluency and communicative competence of the student. The tester described a situation in which a teenager might need to convince another person about some issue. The students were expected to tell how they would express themselves in the given situation; the usual task was to provide arguments to convince a parent to raise the student's allowance. If necessary, the tester would use judicious questions to increase the quantity or the quality of the speech used.

The five-point rating scale used for scoring was the same as the one developed and used successfully in 1984 and 1985 with Grade 12 and 13 students respectively. Each point on the scale was accompanied by a description of the typical performance at that level. It was also possible to indicate through the use of half-scores a proficiency which seemed to exceed that described at one level but was not equal to that of the next level. The description associated with each rating used with these students is given in Appendix C of this report. The test was administered along with the Structures test to random samples of the Grade 10 early- and late-entry immersion students in both Ottawa and Carleton.

In order to test the reliability of scoring, the tapes of the Fluency test for 27 students were rescored by the same tester after an interval of more than a month. The second scoring was within a half score of the first one in 89 per cent of the cases. In no case was there a difference of more than one on the rating scale. A chi square test of significance showed no significant difference between the two distributions of scores.

The scores for the various groups on the Fluency Test are shown in Table 12. When the comparable Ottawa and Carleton groups were combined to give larger samples, the mean score of the whole early-entry immersion group was found to be significantly greater than that of the total late-entry group. Differences between the early- and late-entry groups in the individual boards were not significant.

TABLE 12

FRENCH SPEAKING TEST (FLUENCY): GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group	French Speaking Test (Fluency)		
	Mean	SD	N
Ottawa and Carleton early-entry	3.5*	0.5	74
Ottawa and Carleton late-entry	3.2	0.5	44
Ottawa early-entry	3.6	0.5	28
Ottawa late-entry	3.5	0.5	10
Carleton early-entry	3.4	0.5	46
Carleton late-entry	3.1	0.4	34

* Mean of this group significantly greater than that of the corresponding late-entry group ($p < 0.05$)

Intercorrelations

For the 717 students who took both the Test de français and the Test de mots à trouver in 1985, the correlation between their scores was 0.57, accounting for about 32 per cent of the variance. A correlation of similar size (0.56) was found between the scores on the two measures of speaking (Structures and Fluency) in the group of 126 students who took both of these tests.

Table 13 shows the correlations between the two groups of measures mentioned above. It will be seen that the correlation between the cloze test (Test de mots à trouver) and the two speaking tests is higher than that between the Test de français and the same two tests. It should be remembered that the measure of fluency is based on a rating scale with a range of possible scores from 2 to 5; the correlation of 0.45 between a test with such a limited range and the Cloze test and the correlation of 0.57 with the longer Structures test may thus be considered to be relatively high.

TABLE 13

CORRELATIONS AMONG FRENCH PROFICIENCY SCORES:
GRADE 10 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Group Tests	Speaking tests			
	Structures		Fluency	
	r	N	r	N
Test de mots à trouver	0.59	115	0.45	115
Test de français	0.35	116	0.28	116

It was also possible to examine the effectiveness of the Test de français, which was taken by some of these students in Grade 8, as a predictor of the scores on the four tests taken in Grade 10. The correlations obtained are shown in Table 14. As would be expected, the Grade 8 test, a 35-item test intended for Secondaire I (Grade 7) in Quebec, is a better predictor of scores on the two written tests, with correlations above 0.50, than of the speaking test scores.

TABLE 14

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN GRADE 8 TEST DE FRANÇAIS SCORES
AND GRADE 10 MEASURES OF FRENCH PROFICIENCY:
OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Grade 10 test	Test de français Secondaire I	
	r	N
Test de mots à trouver	0.54	196
Test de français, Secondaire IV	0.52	197
Speaking (Structures)	0.36	39
Speaking (Fluency)	0.28	39

FORMER IMMERSION STUDENTS

PROCEDURES

As part of the 1985 contract with the Ministry of Education, an effort was also made to gain information about the French proficiency of Grade 10 students who had followed either an early- or late-entry immersion program at the elementary level, but who had decided against continuing in a bilingual high school program. Since such students were expected to be in core French classes with other pupils whose exposure to French had been considerably less and whose level of French proficiency was therefore undoubtedly lower, it was important to see how they were performing after a couple of years in a core program. A preliminary effort to do this had been made in 1981, when a small group of Grade 10 former immersion students was tested (Morrison, Bonyun, and Pawley, 1981).

The ability to locate such students was made possible by the ongoing student tracing procedures which have been undertaken each year by the FRENCH Project. The criteria for inclusion in the group of former immersion students were the same as those for the Grade 10 bilingual-program students, except that the student would not have entered the high school bilingual program after finishing Grade 8. It was decided that any such students attending one of the schools offering a bilingual-program should be tested with the bilingual-program students. The decision was also made to test at any other school where there were a minimum of three former immersion students at the Grade 10 level.

In the Ottawa and Carleton Boards 44 and 65 students respectively were identified as belonging in the group to be tested. The heads of French at the schools concerned were asked to see that each student on the list was present at the testing sessions. However, as in 1981, the various schools differed in the effectiveness of the means used to notify the students and encourage them to participate. In addition, some students may have felt uncertain about their French proficiency and consequently reluctant to be tested; others took one test and then did not show up for the other. It is not known, therefore, whether the 61 students actually tested were representative of the whole group of former immersion students. However, it is possible to present certain comparisons between the results for this subgroup and those for the Grade 10 bilingual-program group tested in the same year.

The two written tests given to the bilingual-program students were also administered to the Grade 10 students who had been in an immersion program to the end of Grade 8. The tests were the Test de français, Secondaire IV, and the Test de mots à trouver, Niveau C (Cloze test). The types of analysis performed were also similar to those described in the previous section of this report, with the addition of comparisons between results for the former immersion students and those in the bilingual program.

The Verbal Reasoning subtest score was used as a covariate in several of the analyses reported earlier. When scores for these groups on this test were examined, it was found that the mean scores of the bilingual-program groups from both early- and late-entry immersion were

higher than those of the former immersion students from the same program; the difference was statistically significant in the case of the late-entry group. It was also possible to compare the scores on the Test de français at the Grade 8 level for these two groups. In this case the difference in scores was significant for each of the program groups. Thus it appears that the former immersion group which left the program after Grade 8 was, on the average, somewhat less capable in these areas than the groups which continued with the bilingual program in high school. Since the number of former immersion students is relatively small, scores for the early-entry students in the two boards have been combined, as were those for the late-entry groups. Table 15 presents the test results for the four subgroups identified.

TABLE 15

MEAN APTITUDE TEST SCORES: GRADE 10 FORMER IMMERSION AND BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Group	Verbal Reasoning			Grade 8 Français I		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Former Immersion						
Early-entry	23.8	9.3	23	18.4	4.5	10
Late-entry	24.1	9.2	38	16.7	5.0	7
Bilingual Program						
Early-entry	27.2	8.2	284	20.9*	4.0	98
Late-entry	29.2*	9.5	191	20.7*	4.0	48

* Mean score significantly different from that of the corresponding former immersion group ($p < 0.05$)

RESULTS

About 60 former immersion students at the Grade 10 level took the two tests of French reading skills and language usage which were administered to the students at the same grade level in the bilingual program. The results of these tests for the combined groups of early- and late-entry students from the two boards are shown in Table 16. The mean scores of the former early-entry students were greater than those of the students who had been in late-entry immersion, although the difference was significant for only one of the two tests.

Data are also available for the 1981 administration of the Test de mots à trouver to 36 former late-entry immersion students at the Grade 10 level. The mean score of the 1981 group was 23.5, which is significantly lower than that of the former late-entry group tested in 1985 (Morrison et al., 1981, p. 17).

TABLE 16

FRENCH PROFICIENCY TESTS: GRADE 10 FORMER IMMERSION STUDENTS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Test and group	Mean	SD	N
Test de français, Secondaire IV			
Early-entry	21.0*	4.7	23
Late-entry	18.2	4.0	35
Test de mots à trouver, Niveau C			
Early-entry	27.8	6.3	18
Late-entry	25.1	5.1	36

* Mean of this group greater than that of the corresponding late-entry group ($p < 0.05$)

It was also possible to compare the scores for the Test de français I taken in Grade 8 and the Test de français IV taken in Grade 10 for a small group of former immersion students who had scores for both tests. This was done, as it was for the bilingual-program students, using equipercentile methods to convert both sets of scores to the Français III level. Table 17 shows the converted scores for both years for the former immersion and for the bilingual-program groups.

Although there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the early- and late-entry groups for either the former immersion or bilingual-program groups, it was found that the scores for the former immersion group from early-entry immersion and both bilingual-program groups had Grade 10 means which were significantly greater than those for the same group at Grade 8. For this small group of students it is noteworthy that considerable improvement in scores had occurred over the two-year period after leaving immersion, but we have no knowledge of what exposure to French these students had had during this period.

TABLE 17

TEST DE FRANÇAIS SCORES CONVERTED TO SECONDAIRE III: GRADE 8 AND 10 FORMER IMMERSION AND BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS, OTTAWA, 1983 AND 1985

Group	N	Grade 8 score		Grade 10 score	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Former Immersion (all)	17	16.1	4.2	20.8*	4.7
Bilingual Program					
Early-entry	93	19.0	3.9	23.3*	4.9
Late-entry	46	18.7	3.8	24.3*	5.8

* Mean of this group significantly greater than the Grade 8 score of the same group ($p < 0.05$)

Since the ability levels of the former immersion students were different from those of students remaining in the bilingual program, comparisons of the French proficiency results of these two groups were made after adjusting the scores for ability, using the DAT Verbal Reasoning test score as covariate. These results are given in Table 18 for both of the tests administered to the former immersion students.

It will be seen that there were significant differences between the unadjusted mean scores of both former immersion groups and the two bilingual-program groups. However, after adjustment for ability, the scores on the Test de français and on the Test de mots à trouver for the combined group of former students in the early-entry programs of the two boards was no longer significantly different from the scores of those who remained in the program at the high school level.

TABLE 18

FRENCH PROFICIENCY TEST SCORES:
GRADE 10 FORMER IMMERSION AND BILINGUAL-PROGRAM GROUPS,
OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Test and group	Adjusted Mean	Unadjusted Mean	SD	N
Test de français, Sec. IV				
Former Immersion				
Early-entry	22.3	21.0*	4.7	23
Late-entry	19.5*	18.2*	4.0	35
Bilingual Program				
Early-entry	23.8	23.7	6.0	267
Late-entry	23.6	24.2	6.9	182
Test de mots à trouver (C)				
Former Immersion				
Early-entry	28.6	27.8*	6.3	18
Late-entry	25.7*	25.1*	5.1	36
Bilingual program				
Early-entry	31.1	31.8	4.1	269
Late-entry	31.3	31.6	4.0	185

* Mean of this group significantly less than those of both bilingual-program groups ($p < 0.05$)

TRACING THE K-71 COHORT

INTRODUCTION

As noted earlier, the FRENCH Project has for many years been involved in the tracing of students in various programs for the teaching of French as a second language in the Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education. A system of tracing which records a student's school, grade level, and program at least once a year has been followed. This provides the information to ascertain that the students tested are indeed representative of the program being evaluated and to answer a variety of questions about student movement, choices made at different levels, and program retention.

In 1971, the first year an early immersion program was generally available in the Ottawa area, 17 schools in the Ottawa and Carleton Boards offered this option to students entering kindergarten. All but two of these schools also offered the usual kindergarten program using English as the language of instruction. It was decided to follow the progress of that group of students, which came to be designated as the K-71 cohort, consisting of about 450 immersion students and 400 in the English program who started kindergarten in the fall of 1971 in one of those 17 schools offering immersion at the time.

It was later felt to be desirable to follow another immersion cohort which was not as likely to show effects due to the novelty and experimental nature of the 1971 program. This second group, known as the K-74 cohort, consisted of all students who began kindergarten in an Ottawa Board school in the fall of 1974. The first part of this report has presented the results for the spring 1985 testing of those students from this cohort who remained in immersion until Grade 10, including some who had followed the late-entry program. The continued tracing also made possible the identification of those early- and late-entry immersion students in successive cohorts who opted to leave the immersion program after Grade 8 and take a regular English program at the secondary level.

One aspect of the 1985 contract with the Ministry of Education was the tracing of the students in the K-71 cohort in preparation for post-secondary follow-up of students who had been in early- or late-entry immersion programs to the end of Grade 8 and those who had been in such a program through Grade 12 or 13. This section of the report presents information about the grade and program location of the members of the K-71 cohort and related groups during the 1984-85 school year when their expected grade level was 13. It also provides data about the plans for post-secondary education of this group of students.

K-71 IMMERSION GROUP IN FALL 1984

When the tracing of the entire K-71 cohort was completed in the fall of 1984, it was found that 241 of the 450 students in the original immersion group of the cohort had remained in local schools up to June 1984, nearly half of them in a bilingual program. As Table 19 shows, 87 of

this group were in a Grade 13 bilingual program in fall 1984 and 4 were in a Grade 12 bilingual program. Another 14 had left school after completing either Grade 12 or 13 in a bilingual program.

TABLE 19

GRADE AND PROGRAM LOCATION IN OCTOBER 1984 OF ORIGINAL K-71 COHORT STUDENTS WHO HAD STAYED IN OTTAWA OR CARLETON SCHOOLS UNTIL JUNE 1984

Location in October 1984	No. of students from original immersion group	
	N	%
Bilingual Program		
Grade 12	4	
Grade 13	87	
Left school after Grade 12	7	
Left school after Grade 13	7	
	105	44%
English Program		
Grade 11	13	
Grade 12	35	
Grade 13	54	
Left school after Grade 12	29	
Left school after Grade 13	5	
	136	56%
Total remaining in system to June 1984	241	

LATE-ENTRY IMMERSION GROUPS

Associated with the K-71 cohort and included in the tracing procedures were the groups of students who entered an Ottawa late-entry immersion program in the fall of 1977 at the Grade 6 level or the Carleton program at the Grade 7 level in the following year. These late-entry groups included some members of both the original English and original immersion groups of the cohort, plus a number of other students who had not been traced prior to that time. Details concerning the location of these and other groups were given in the Eighth Annual Report to the Ministry (Morrison, Bonyun, and Pawley, 1980).

By June 1984, 124 Ottawa and 132 Carleton students who had completed the late-entry program in June 1980 remained in local public schools. Table 20 shows the grade and program location of these groups in the following October, when the expected grade level was Grade 13.

TABLE 20

GRADE AND PROGRAM LOCATION IN OCTOBER 1984 OF ORIGINAL LATE-ENTRY STUDENTS WHO HAD STAYED IN OTTAWA OR CARLETON SCHOOLS UNTIL JUNE 1984

Program or destination	No. of students from original group			
	Ottawa		Carleton	
	N	%	N	%
Bilingual Program				
Grade 12	-		2	
Grade 13	46		49	
Left school after Grade 12	-		12	
Left school after Grade 13	2		1	
	48	39%	64	48%
English Program				
Grade 11	3		-	
Grade 12	8		1	
Grade 13	57		47	
Left school after Grade 12	8		18	
Left school after Grade 13	-		2	
	76	61%	68	52%
Total remaining in system to June 1984	124		132	

SURVEYS OF BILINGUAL-PROGRAM STUDENTS

In June 1984 students in Ottawa and Carleton bilingual programs at the Grade 12 level were asked to complete questionnaires at the same time as they took several tests of French proficiency. The groups surveyed at that time included those members of both the K-71 cohort and the late-entry groups described above who had remained in a bilingual high school program up to the end of Grade 12. Also surveyed were other students who had joined the bilingual high school program from other sources, such as programs offered by the local separate boards. These questionnaires provided information about where the students could be contacted once they had left school, as well as about their plans for the following year. Further details about this survey are found in the Eleventh Annual Report to the Ministry Part III (Morrison and Bonyun, 1984).

In the spring of 1985 an attempt was made to have another questionnaire filled out by Grade 13 bilingual-program students, including those in the K-71 cohort. Like the questionnaires used in the previous year, these asked for permanent addresses and plans for the following year. Since these students were now in Grade 13 and many were no longer taking courses taught in French, it was more difficult to distribute and collect questionnaires than it had been in the previous year.

Some of the early- and late-entry immersion students being traced had been in a bilingual program until the end of Grade 12 but could no longer be reached through the bilingual high schools. Such students were identified and questionnaires were sent to them individually through the school, with a stamped return envelope. Following a reminder by telephone or mail, responses were eventually received from 83 per cent of the 224 bilingual-program high school students who might be included in future projects.

During the same period some Grade 13 classes were visited as part of a study by W. R. McGillivray in several school systems across Canada (McGillivray, 1985). The questionnaire used was developed jointly with the Research Centre to avoid the administration of more than one such instrument.

This and previous studies have found that almost all of the bilingual-program students surveyed in Grade 12 or Grade 13 indicated that they planned to continue to some form of post-secondary education. Table 21 shows the institutions that the 1985 Grade 13 group (including members of the K-71 cohort) expected to attend, as shown by the McGillivray study. This information will be useful in connection with several anticipated studies of immersion students at the post-secondary level.

TABLE 21

POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS WHICH GRADE 13 BILINGUAL-PROGRAM STUDENTS PLANNED TO ATTEND: OTTAWA AND CARLETON, SPRING 1985

Institution	No. of students	Per cent
University of Ottawa	57	32
Carleton	27	15
Queen's	26	14
McGill	15	8
Algonquin College	10	6
Western	9	5
University of Toronto	8	4
Waterloo	7	4
Ryerson	5	3
Trent	3	2
Other universities (6)	10	6
Other community colleges (2)	2	1
Total	179	100

WHEN PRIMARY PUPILS TRANSFER OUT OF FRENCH IMMERSION

INTRODUCTION

Scope of the Research

The last clause of the 1985 contract with the Ministry of Education involved a follow-up of immersion students who transferred to English programs in Grades 1, 2, and 3. Many parents, when considering whether to enrol their children in French immersion, ask if it is possible to determine in advance whether their child will be successful in immersion. In spite of efforts to find suitable screening devices, it does not appear likely that a practical and reliable predictive test battery can be found. This is in part because of the wide variety of reasons for lack of success in the program. It was the intent of this part of the study to examine the transfer process and the ways in which it is carried out. Through questionnaires and interviews, information was obtained about the factors which led to the decision to transfer children from French immersion to the English program, the steps which were taken to facilitate the transfer, and what problems had occurred.

Previous Studies

An earlier study which was supported by the Ministry of Education (Morrison, Martin, and Martin, 1978) included as one of the groups studied 26 children who had transferred from French immersion to the English program in Ottawa or Carleton. By the fall of 1977, six of these pupils were in Grade 5 and three others were classed as low-performing in Grade 6, the expected grade level, since their scores on at least two of the three standardized tests for which results were available were below the 35th percentile.

In spite of this, on several measures of aptitude, achievement, and behaviour which were used in this study, the transfer group did not differ significantly from children who had remained in French immersion or from a group which had been classified as doing satisfactory work in English (above the 35th percentile on the tests mentioned above). However, the transfer group had consistently higher scores on achievement and aptitude tests than the children who were identified as low-performing in English.

In the previous year (1977), as part of another study funded by the Ministry of Education, Ontario, parents of children in both the K-71 and K-74 cohorts who had left the early immersion program were sent questionnaires asking them to indicate reasons why the child had transferred (Pawley, Bonyun, and Lochnan, 1978). In these two groups between 20 and 30 per cent of the parents included as reasons for transfer of a child at the kindergarten level such factors as a family move, relationship with the French immersion teachers, emotional or behavioural problems, and difficulty in understanding French (in order of frequency). For those who left the immersion program in Grade 1 or 2, similar proportions of those in the two cohorts mentioned difficulty with French, emotional or behavioural problems, lack of remedial help in French immersion, and relationship with the teacher (again in order of frequency). Transportation

problems were mentioned frequently (28 per cent of the time) by parents of children in both Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 of the K-71 cohort, but by only one of the 38 respondents whose children were in the K-74 cohort, suggesting that for the later group transportation was no longer a common source of difficulty, probably because the program was more widely available.

The same study examined the grade progress of children in the Ottawa Board who had transferred from French immersion to the English program. Of the 37 in the K-74 cohort who had left during or at the end of the kindergarten year, two had repeated Grade 1 and four were in special education, while the remainder (84 per cent) were at the expected grade level. However, only 6 of the 16 who had left during Grade 1 or Grade 2, or 38 per cent of the group, were at the expected grade level (Grade 2) in the English program.

For the K-71 cohort in the spring of 1977, nearly half of the 25 students who had left immersion during Grade 1 or Grade 2 were in Grade 4, one year below the expected level. Three quarters of those who had transferred during Kindergarten or in Grade 3 or later were at the appropriate grade level or even, in two cases, accelerated.

In all groups of both the K-71 and the K-74 cohorts, however, the 128 parents appeared to be satisfied with the child's progress at the time of the questionnaire, with 93 per cent of them labelling it 'very good' or 'fairly good'. Of the 9 children who were said to be having difficulty, all but two had transferred in Grade 1 or Grade 2.

Other data (Pawley et al., 1978) have shown that transfer students have tended to be similar in achievement and aptitude to the students in the regular English programs in the schools offering immersion and to have higher scores on achievement and aptitude tests than the total group in the English program in Ottawa. In some cases, their scores have not been significantly different from those of students remaining in French immersion. However, the transfer process is still a traumatic experience for many children, who often see themselves or are seen by their parents as having failed, in spite of evidence to the contrary.

There has been continuing interest in the prediction of "success" in French immersion, particularly for children for whom the decision to enrol in the program is made at the age of four or five. An attempt to identify suitable predictors was carried out with a group of children in four-year-old kindergarten, starting in the spring of 1977 (Trites, 1981; Trites and Price, 1980). An extensive assessment battery was administered to 200 children whose parents had indicated an intention to enrol them in French immersion in the fall. In 1979 (at the end of Grade 1 for most of the children) 169 of the initial group were reassessed; 124 of these were in French immersion at that time. Some of the others had never actually enrolled in French immersion, but a group of 25 children then in the English program were "clearly established as drop-outs from the French immersion program on the basis of academic factors" (Trites, 1981, p. 54).

On a number of measures of scholastic aptitude and achievement, including "readiness" tests, the group remaining in French immersion out-performed the "drop-outs", although both

appeared to have scores higher than those of typical children at the end of four-year-old or five-year-old kindergarten. At the Grade 1 level the drop-outs out-performed children who continued in French immersion on measures of reading and spelling in English, suggesting that they had "responded well to instruction in the English language", which had not yet been received by the French immersion classes. When IQ differences were controlled statistically, the drop-out group continued to differ significantly from the French immersion group on the readiness measures (CIRCUS, 1974) and on the Tactual Performance Test (Trites, 1981, p. 57).

In Trites' 1980 study, for the 25 children identified as drop-outs for "academic reasons", social or emotional adjustment problems were indicated by 40 per cent of the parents as reasons for transferring the child from French immersion. Only six of the children enrolled in immersion at the Grade 1 level and four of these transferred in October, so that the group described as academic drop-outs is essentially limited to children who had not yet begun to read in either language.

Some investigators (such as Bruck, 1978) have considered the issue of learning disabilities in relation to learning a second language, but relatively few cases have been included in reported studies. For children in many other studies of second-language learning, the language of the home was not the dominant language of the community.

Not much evidence is available to help educators plan the sequence of reading instruction in the first or second language for immersion students. Tucker (1975, as reported in Trites, 1981) has proposed a variety of explanations for the contradictory evidence related to this issue, mainly for the teaching of English to minority language children in various situations. There appears to be a need for more careful examination of this issue in the Canadian French immersion situation.

In view of the obstacles to reliable identification of potential learning difficulties in French immersion at the time that children enter kindergarten, it is particularly important that careful attention be paid to the child's progress in the program and to a smooth and non-traumatic transfer if a decision to do so is made. The present study focuses on children who transfer between Kindergarten and Grade 3; it examines the way in which the decision to transfer is made and the procedures used to help the child adjust to the change.

PROCEDURES

Students in the Target Group

In the Ottawa-Carleton area during the period under consideration, more than one child in three entered a French immersion program on starting five-year-old kindergarten. Immersion enrolment from Kindergarten to Grade 3 in September 1983 totalled approximately 2070 pupils in 12 Ottawa schools and 3560 in 16 schools in Carleton. The 1984 enrolment showed an increase of about six per cent over 1983 levels in each board, to about 2190 in Ottawa and 3760 in Carleton.

The groups to be examined in this study included pupils who had left the French immersion program from a Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, or 3 class in Ottawa or Carleton schools between September 1983 and June 1985 - that is, during either the 1983-84 or 1984-85 school years or during the summer of 1984. The class lists from all Ottawa and Carleton schools provided the initial source of information in identifying children in the target group. Schools were then asked about the destination of any pupils who had been in immersion classes in 1983-84 but did not appear on the lists for the following year. Inquiries were also made about any further transfers from immersion since the class lists were made up early in the 1984-85 school year. In this way it was possible to identify a sample of about 430 transfer pupils still in Ottawa or Carleton public schools, with information about grade level, date of transfer, sending school, and receiving school for each one.

Table 22 shows the number of students identified as transfers at each of the four grade levels in Ottawa and Carleton during the period under study, as well as the approximate number of students enrolled in the immersion program in these grades. Enrolment figures are based on class lists from the schools and enrolment statistics provided by the principals. The data in this table are presented separately for 1983-84 and for 1984-85 because of the difference in the periods involved. It should be noted that the study did not consider students who left immersion and did not remain in the system.

It will be seen in this table that the proportion of transfer students was higher in Ottawa than in Carleton within all groups; these differences were significant for groups including all grade levels. A number of factors could have affected these transfer rates. For example, more Ottawa students were able to transfer within the same school and in Ottawa several special programs were available at the primary level, including alternative schools and primary enrichment.

The group of 437 children who had transferred to the English program was further broken down by board, by grade level prior to transfer, by sex, and by time of transfer. Table 23 gives details concerning each of these characteristics of the group. It should be remembered that in the total group there are two cohorts of students who transferred during the school year and only one cohort representing transfers at the end of the year. The table shows that for these groups, as for other groups examined previously, the number of transfer students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 is greater by a factor of nearly 2:1 than the number in Grades 2 and 3. There is also a particularly large number of students who do not return to Grade 1 in French immersion after spending the kindergarten year in that program.

TABLE 22

TRANSFER RATES FROM OTTAWA AND CARLETON IMMERSION PROGRAMS:

KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3, 1983-84 AND 1984-85

Board	Grade	No. of FI pupils*	Transfer during school year		Transfer summer 1984	Transfer Sept. 83 to Sept. 84	
			N	%		N	%
Ottawa			1983-84				
	Kindergarten	600	16	2.7	49	65	10.8
	Grade 1	600	18	3.0	23	41	6.8
	Grade 2	440	14	3.2	11	25	5.7
	Grade 3	430	16	3.7	24	40	9.3
	K-Grade 3	2070	64	3.1	107	171	8.3
Carleton			1983-84				
	Kindergarten	990	14	1.4	37	51	5.2
	Grade 1	990	19	1.9	16	35	3.5
	Grade 2	810	13	1.6	13	26	3.2
	Grade 3	770	5	0.6	10	15	1.9
	K-Grade 3	3560	51	1.4	76	127	3.6
Ottawa			1984-85				
	Kindergarten	680	18	2.6		Data not available for summer 1985	
	Grade 1	560	28	5.0			
	Grade 2	520	22	4.2			
	Grade 3	430	8	1.9			
	K-Grade 3	2190	76	3.5			
Carleton			1984-85				
	Kindergarten	1040	13	1.3		Data not available for summer 1985	
	Grade 1	1020	28	2.7			
	Grade 2	920	13	1.4			
	Grade 3	780	9	1.2			
	K-Grade 3	3760	63	1.7			

* Rounded estimates of number of immersion pupils in grade

When the groups were broken down by grade it was found that there was a significantly higher proportion of boys than girls leaving in Kindergarten or Grade 1. Moreover, the Kindergarten and Grade 3 transfer groups included a lower proportion of mid-year transfers than the groups leaving immersion from Grade 1 or Grade 2.

TABLE 23

COMPOSITION OF TARGET GROUP: TRANSFERS FROM IMMERSION, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Grade prior to transfer	Time of transfer	Number of students				
		from Ottawa		from Carleton		Total
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Kindergarten	Sept 83-June 84	12	4	10	4	30
	Summer 84	23	26	19	18	86
	Sept 84-June 85	12	6	12	1	31
	All	47	36	41	23	147
Grade 1	Sept 83-June 84	9	9	11	8	37
	Summer 84	17	6	8	8	39
	Sept 84-June 85	13	15	14	14	56
	All	39	30	33	30	132
Grade 2	Sept 83-June 84	10	4	5	8	27
	Summer 84	2	9	7	6	24
	Sept 84-June 85	9	13	6	7	35
	All	21	26	18	21	86
Grade 3	Sept 83-June 84	7	9	2	3	21
	Summer 84	11	13	3	7	34
	Sept 84-June 85	4	4	4	5	17
	All	22	26	9	15	72
All grades	Sept 83-June 84	38	26	28	23	115
	Summer 84	53	54	37	39	183
	Sept 84-June 85	38	38	36	27	139
	All	129	118	101	89	437

It was also found that 17 per cent of Carleton students moved to the English program in the same school, while in Ottawa the move did not involve changing schools for 46 per cent of the target group. This difference reflects the way in which the immersion programs in the two boards are organized. In Ottawa there was a dual-track program in all except 2 of the 12 immersion schools, while in Carleton there were 7 dual-track and 9 immersion-only schools. In both boards just over 20 per cent of the total group of transfers had repeated a grade level on transferring or were listed as being in the same grade in the fall of 1984 as in the fall of 1985. The proportion might be higher if it had been possible to include the grade level in the fall of 1985 in these data. Not surprisingly, a significantly smaller proportion of transfers from kindergarten needed to repeat a grade.

Instruments

The necessary questionnaires and information forms were developed and distributed in the spring of 1985. Those for English-program and immersion teachers were sent to the schools, while parent questionnaires were either sent home with the child or mailed directly to the

parents, depending on the wishes of the school involved. Questionnaires were returned either through the school or mailed directly very close to the end of the school year.

The questionnaire for parents of children in the target group contained questions about the child and his or her school experiences. These included items about home language background, characteristics and interests of the child, attitude and achievement while in immersion and since leaving, difficulties experienced in the immersion program, and the process of making the decision and moving the child to the English class.

Information was obtained both from the immersion teacher from whose class the child transferred, and from the English-program teacher who received him or her directly from immersion. However, teachers were asked for information only when children had been in their classroom during the current academic year. Thus information forms were sent to immersion teachers only for children who had transferred since September 1984 and to English-program teachers of this group and for those who had left immersion at the end of the 1983-84 school year.

The information form for immersion teachers asked about the child's progress while in their classroom and about factors affecting the decision to transfer the child. Teachers of the English classes were asked to describe the transition process, the information they were able to obtain about the child, and any problems exhibited on entering the English program.

Interviews with principals were held in the fall of 1985. A total of 21 Ottawa Board principals were interviewed, including ones from immersion only, English only, and dual-track schools. They were asked about the ways in which they received information about transferring students and in which they participated in the decision and transition process. Time did not allow for similar interviews of principals in the schools of the Carleton Board. Copies of the interview schedule and of the questionnaires used will be found in Appendix D.

Response Rates

Questionnaires were received from parents of 196 of these transfer children, or 45 per cent of the target group. These children had transferred from French immersion in the schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education during Kindergarten or during Grade 1, 2, or 3 between September 1983 and June 1985.

As already mentioned, the target group for English-program teachers consisted of those who received transfers from immersion into their classrooms as the start of or during the 1984-85 school year. Overall these teachers completed information forms for 234 children, representing nearly three quarters of those known to have transferred into their classes during this period.

Information sheets were sent to immersion teachers of only the smaller group of children who had left the program since September 1984; these forms were received for almost 70 per cent of children in the target group. Table 24 shows response rates of the various groups.

TABLE 24

RESPONSE RATE FOR QUESTIONNAIRES AND INFORMATION FORMS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF TRANSFERS FROM IMMERSION, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

	Ottawa		Carleton		Combined response rate
	Target group	Number received	Target group	Number received	
Parent Questionnaires					
(for children transferring Sept '83 to June '85)					
Kindergarten	64	24	83	33	39
Grade 1	63	22	69	37	45
Grade 2	39	18	47	23	48
Grade 3	24	13	48	26	54
Boys	101	42	129	58	43
Girls	89	35	118	61	46
Sept 83-June 84	51	17	64	24	36
Summer 84	76	29	107	57	49
Sept 84-June 85	63	31	76	38	50
All	190	77	247	119	45
English Teacher Information Forms					
(for children transferring June '84 to June '85)					
Kindergarten	50	30	67	57	74
Grade 1	44	26	51	37	66
Grade 2	26	18	33	27	76
Grade 3	19	9	32	30	76
Summer 84	76	40	107	88	70
Sept 84-June 85	63	43	76	63	76
All	139	83	183	151	73
Immersion Teacher Information Forms					
(for children transferring Sept '84 to June '85)					
Kindergarten	14	4	18	14	56
Grade 1	28	22	28	20	75
Grade 2	13	9	22	17	74
Grade 3	9	5	8	2	41
All	63	40	76	53	67

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE: OTTAWA AND CARLETON

Some of the questions in both parent and teacher questionnaires asked for information about the children who had transferred from French immersion during the primary grades. The responses from this section of the questionnaire are reported below for the two boards combined, with differences among subgroups divided by board, grade, or sex noted in some instances.

Language Background of the Family

It appeared that almost all families of children in these transfer groups were English-speaking. For all but one of the 119 respondents in Carleton, English was the language spoken in the home, while in Ottawa, 70 of 75 parents gave the same response. No families indicated that French was the home language.

When asked to rate the French proficiency of each parent as "very good", "adequate", or "poor", over half of those who responded chose the third of these alternatives. In each board, fewer than 20 per cent of mothers and of fathers were said to be "very good" in French.

Personality and Interests

Parents were given five pairs of opposite charactistics and asked to rate their children on a five-point scale between them. For the quiet-talkative scale, for instance, the alternatives were: very quiet, somewhat quiet, neither one nor the other, and somewhat or very talkative. More than twice as many children were rated at the talkative as at the quiet end of the scale and similarly more than twice as many were rated as independent as opposed to dependent. Three quarters of the students who transferred were said to be somewhat or very active and about half were rated at the outgoing end of the outgoing-reserved scale. The proportions at both ends of the scale ranging from "easily distracted" to "concentrates well" were more nearly equal than for the other scales.

Another item presented parents with several statements about the child's interests and asked them to check as many as applied to their child. Nearly 80 per cent of the pupils were said to "enjoy active games and sports", while about two thirds "had a special interest in art-related activities". Between 55 and 60 per cent "loved to read" and "enjoyed mathematical games and puzzles". There was a significant difference among the groups who transferred at different grade levels in the proportion who liked to read, with more of the children transferring in the earlier grades being said to "love to read". About 14 per cent of all children were reported to be left handed.

Attitude Towards School While in Immersion

Over half of the children in the transfer group were described by their parents as having a somewhat or very negative attitude towards school while in immersion. Fewer than a fifth were said to be "enthusiastic" and just over a fifth were "moderately positive" about school. However, there did not seem to be an attendance problem; the immersion teachers reported that 80 per cent of the children had been absent five or fewer times, most often because of illness.

Just over a quarter of the nearly 200 respondents made comments pertaining to their child's attitude to school while in immersion and about 35 of these described children who were reluctant to go to school, frustrated, withdrawn, or lacking in confidence and enthusiasm:

- Before the transfer we experienced many problems: anxiety, stress, not wanting to go to school, anger, frustration.

- Naturally he would get frustrated when he kept failing at his work. He would often complain of stomach aches and was quite capable of making himself physically sick.

- Hated the long bus ride, felt left out in class participation projects and was left to sit by himself so became withdrawn.

- In immersion he started out enthusiastic but became negative as he fell behind.

A smaller group of parents described their child's consistently positive attitude towards school, in some cases in spite of difficulties:

- Enjoyed the French and did not want to go into English program.

- My daughter had an enthusiastic attitude towards school in French immersion; however, she was often upset over having difficulty understanding.

Achievement

Parents were asked to rate their children's overall academic progress prior to transfer from the immersion program. Fewer than a quarter of the total group were said to have been progressing "very well" or "satisfactorily" while in immersion. In both boards a higher proportion of children who transferred in kindergarten were said to be doing very well or satisfactorily, as compared to the group who transferred after the start of Grade 1. When the groups from the two boards were combined, it was also found that a higher proportion of students who transfered in mid-year as opposed to during the summer were said to be having some or considerable difficulty.

The comments about academic progress offered by about a quarter of parent respondents described a variety of different circumstances. Some parents had not been aware of any academic difficulties until their child was in Grade 2 or 3, as in the case of a parent who said:

- I was led to believe he was progressing OK in French. In grade 3 the teacher admitted there were problems.

Some of the children were described as being unhappy in immersion or as having behaviour problems, and in some cases there was an apparent personality conflict with a particular teacher. The following comments indicate the variety of situations mentioned by parents in answering this question:

- Very tired, lethargic, didn't like school, never laughed or smiled.

- Before transfer his difficulties were more related to keeping on task, lack of concentration.

- He did very well in grade 1. In grade 2 he began having difficulty until he was transferred to English.

- She was not happy at the immersion school which was reflected in her academic progress.

- Teachers felt his difficulty was from his being shy and immature.

- We felt her academic potential was being stifled by the very structure of the grade 1 immersion program.

Reasons for Enrolling the Child in Immersion

Parents were asked to rate seven factors as to their importance to them in choosing a French immersion program for their child. "My child will need French to get a good job" was the reason selected by the highest proportion of respondents; in both boards, nearly 90 per cent indicated that this factor has been somewhat or very important to them. "The early grades are a good time to try out immersion", "Knowing French will give my child opportunities for wide social experiences", and "I felt my child would derive satisfaction from knowing a second language" were also factors of some importance to over 80 per cent of respondents. The extra challenge involved in learning a second language was a reason for about three quarters of respondent families and the child's own eagerness to learn French was important for about half of them. The child's desire to learn the language had been considered to be somewhat or very important by parents of a significantly higher proportion of children who transferred during Grade 2 or 3 than of those who transferred during Kindergarten or Grade 1.

About a quarter of the respondents added some other reason for putting their child in immersion, most frequently that it was a good opportunity or that older siblings were doing well in the program (10 respondents each). The French background of some family members, a belief that French was a necessary skill, and the child's need for a challenge were each mentioned by four or five parents.

REASONS FOR TRANSFER

Parents' Reports: Ottawa and Carleton

Problems in immersion. Parents were asked which of a number of academic, social, and emotional factors had been a problem for their child while in immersion. As part of the same section of the questionnaire, parents were also asked to indicate the reasons for transferring the child to the English program. Table 25 shows the problem areas identified by over 15 per cent of the 196 respondents to these two questions. The difficulties most frequently mentioned by these parents tended to be the same as those indicated eight years earlier by parents of children in the K-71 and K-74 cohorts who transferred from immersion (Pawley, Bonyun, and Lochnan, 1978).

TABLE 25

DIFFICULTIES IN FRENCH IMMERSION:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS OF TRANSFERS FROM FRENCH IMMERSION,
OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Difficulty	Per cent responding			
	Problem in FI		Reason for transfer	
	Ottawa (N=77)	Carleton (N=119)	Ottawa (N=77)	Carleton (N=119)
Understanding French	34	22	25	21
Speaking French	23	18	20	14
Relations with FI teacher	23	19	18	22
Emotional/behaviour problems	18	16	16	17
Lack of remedial help in FI	24	19	15	17

Difficulty in reading English and in reading French were also indicated by about a third of the parents of children who transferred in Grade 2 or 3 as a reason for leaving immersion. The twelve other problems listed involved specific difficulties such as hearing or speech problems or a family move; each was checked by less than 10 per cent of the group from either board, with one exception: 12 per cent of the Ottawa parents said that for their child lack of challenge or boredom was a reason for leaving immersion.

It may be noted that, in addition to the respondents indicated in the first part of Table 25, other groups, mostly of comparable size, checked the response "somewhat" in answer to the question about problems encountered in immersion. Moreover, from 3 to 13 per cent of parents did not respond to the question about the problem areas shown in Table 25.

When responses from the two boards were combined, it was found that emotional or behaviour difficulties was given as a reason for transfer for a higher proportion of boys than of girls. It was also found that the relationship with the immersion teacher was indicated as a reason for more of the mid-year transfers than for those leaving immersion over the summer. In addition, problems in the relationship with the teacher were said to be a reason for transfer for a higher proportion of children transferring in Grade 2 or 3 than for those leaving immersion in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

Additional help needed. When asked what else could have been done to help in making the decision, over a third of the parents offered suggestions. The majority revolved around communication with school staff about the child's progress or the need for earlier notification of problems:

- More open discussion about problems being experienced in kindergarten year. We knew our child was unhappy in French immersion but didn't realize he was experiencing so much difficulty.

- ... we were asked to have her tested on November. She wasn't tested until May and we were advised at the end of the year. We had not been asked for an interview in February so we assumed things had straightened out.

- I could have been informed earlier of my child's having so many problems at school. The report card came as a shock.

In some cases the parents perceived a lack of interest in the child's problems:

- The French immersion staff and principal were not interested. As far as they were concerned, she could continue with trouble in school and remedial work until grade 13.

- The teacher could have suggested speaking with the principal or counsellor.

- The principal recommended further testing and personal observation but didn't follow through on it.

Other parents would have liked more general information about immersion and an answer to the question of whether their child would be successful in the program:

- The school staff should give a better idea and explanation of the French immersion program at the time of joining the school.

- More willingness on the part of the Board of Education and the staff of the school to directly discuss the French immersion program. Most teachers and principals state "I'm a firm believer in immersion" - with no concrete reasons. Statistics should be made available on drop out rates, rates of children who experience difficulties, etc. I was simply not able to obtain the information, other than "studies have indicated that by grade 13 your child will be able to ..."

- I feel there could have been more information concerning the "types" of children suited or not suited for French immersion. No one seemed able to give me a definite answer as to whether my son should remain in or be taken out of the program.

A few mentioned a lack of agreement among professionals as to the best course of action:

- We felt our son should have been moved at the end of grade 1. The principal and psychologist felt he should remain and he did until after nine days of grade 2. The grade 2 teacher thought it would be to his benefit to be in English. Great emphasis on giving French a try and little emphasis on happiness of the child.

Several parents commended staff for their help with the decision, while others indicated that nothing would have helped much with this difficult choice:

- It was my choice and my son's. I was very satisfied with the assistance I received in response to my questions.

- Nothing, we consider that the school and all officials took great care and interest in our son's problems.

- Nothing. It was very difficult to make this decision. The only easier thing would be to have the school make the choice.

In responses to this question, as to others, there appeared to be great variety in the types of experiences encountered by the parents in facing the question of transfer.

Making the Decision: Ottawa and Carleton

According to the parents the median amount of time involved in coming to a decision about the move was two to three months. In about 20 per cent of cases the transfer appeared to have been made in within a month of its first being considered. Six months or more elapsed in another 20 per cent of the cases.

By and large, parents seem to have been satisfied with their decision to transfer the child to an English program. About 80 per cent of the parents said 'yes' to this question, while 5 per cent said 'no' and another 13 per cent gave a mixed or unclear response.

According to both parents and teachers, the principal or vice-principal was involved in the decision-making process in from 60 to 70 per cent of the cases. Perceptions of teachers and parents were somewhat different regarding how often the school psychologist had been consulted, with about 35 per cent of the parents and 20 per cent of the teachers indicating that this had been done. In 70 per cent of the cases parents also indicated that the child had been involved in the decision.

French Immersion Teachers' Reports: Ottawa and Carleton

The 53 Carleton and 40 Ottawa students who transferred during the 1984-85 school year were rated by their former immersion teachers as to their proficiency in reading or reading readiness skills, in speaking French, and in understanding French. As may be seen in Table 26, for only a sixth of the group were reading or reading readiness skills said to be fairly good or better; the proportions tended to be higher for speaking and understanding French.

The former immersion teachers were also asked at what time of year the children had first exhibited difficulties in the immersion classroom. Fewer than 10 per cent of the students were said to have had no problems in immersion, while for about two thirds the first signs of difficulty seem to have been observed in September or October.

TABLE 26

CHILDREN'S SKILLS WHILE IN IMMERSION:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IMMERSION TEACHERS,
CARLETON AND OTTAWA, 1985

Skill area	Board	Per cent responding					
		None	A little	Fairly good	Good	Very good	NR
Reading/readiness	Ottawa	30	50	10	2	5	2
	Carleton	25	57	15	0	0	4
Speaking French	Ottawa	25	53	13	2	5	2
	Carleton	23	40	32	2	2	2
Understanding French	Ottawa	10	55	28	2	5	0
	Carleton	15	47	30	6	2	0

The immersion teachers also rated several factors in terms of their contribution to the decision to withdraw the child from the immersion program. Table 27 shows the proportion of the teachers in Carleton and in Ottawa who said that each factor contributed somewhat or a great deal to the decision. Ability to concentrate, verbal communication skills, and self-confidence were the factors most often mentioned; reading skills and emotional development were also said to be a factor in about 70 per cent of cases. Other parental concerns mentioned by immersion teachers, in addition to the list provided, included problems in French immersion encountered by the child's siblings, the desire for the child to succeed, and the child's unhappiness in the program, each given in relation to three or four children.

The final step which led to a decision was most often said by the former immersion teachers to be the parents' concern, the continuing lack of progress of the child, and the report or recommendations of special services; each of these responses was given by 20 to 30 per cent of teachers. In three or four cases either the child's behaviour, his attitude towards school, a sibling's difficulties, or a family move were reported to have finally led to a decision.

TABLE 27

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DECISION TO WITHDRAW CHILD FROM IMMERSION: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IMMERSION TEACHERS, OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Factor	Per cent indicating factor contributing some or a great deal to decision	
	Ottawa (N=40)	Carleton (N=53)
Ability to concentrate	90	79
Verbal communication	80	76
Self-confidence	85	68
Reading skills	80	64
Emotional development	70	70
Social skills	64	49
General knowledge	62	50
Attitude towards French	60	47
Behaviour	60	46
Speech	30	43
Hearing	27	30
General health	10	15
Other parental concerns	17	38

Principals' Views: Ottawa

The principals were asked how a child having problems in French immersion comes to his or her attention and what factors affect the decision to transfer.

Identifying the problem. Practically all of the principals said that the teacher brings the problem to the principal's attention first. One pointed out that the teacher and parent usually have had discussions about the child before the teacher comes to the principal. Another principal said:

> - Even when the parent comes first the teacher has suspected something. Teachers see the academic problems, parents the psychological.

Several principals described systematic procedures for discussion of children who are having problems. In at least two schools regular staff sessions are held for the consideration of the needs of such children, usually with members of the education clinic and the psychology department present. In other cases, after a discussion is held at the school level, the decision is made to ask for assessment by the teacher-diagnostician and the psychologist. Conferences with parents are held at some point during this process.

Two principals said that Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers may note a short attention span, lack of participation or perhaps auditory, sequencing, or attitudinal problems. One mentioned

that if the child has been given the Metropolitan Readiness Test in the spring of the Kindergarten year, children with problems may be identified. Both the principals and the parents can identify potential problems on the basis of the fall report cards, particularly in Grades 2 and 3. By November multidisciplinary conferences are held for any children in question. In one school all referrals now go through the guidance department to avoid a backlog of problems.

One principal pointed out that occasionally parents are worried when the child is achieving on an average level when they feel that the level should be above average. Another said that often the parents come to the school first because their expectations are higher than those of the school or are unrealistic. A child is sometimes removed from French immersion when the parents feel that the language of instruction appears to be adding to behaviour problems. At other times there is a problem in the home situation and the parents do not want to add to the pressures.

One of the principals emphasized that before recommending a change you need all the information you can get. Discussions are held with the teachers who are working with the child, which may include both the English teacher and the French immersion remedial teacher. Parents are always involved in the final decision, and occasionally an agency from outside the Board is consulted.

Another principal said that in an extreme case, where the parent is insisting that the child continue and it is felt that continuing would not help the child, the principal would go to an Identification, Placement and Review Committee for a decision. This principal went on to say:

> - Sometimes a child is bright and has a good auditory memory but a visual memory problem. A child who has a poor visual memory spells badly in either language but still learns both. Sometimes a child has an auditory problem and doesn't like listening or attending to the scene at hand. None of these are good reasons to remove the child from the program. The problem would remain in either language. By remaining the child will have added self-esteem because of language ability. Decisions to transfer are made when all the hard facts are in.

One or two of the principals interviewed mentioned including an interview with the child as part of the transfer process; these principals said that they tried to consider the child's attitude in making the decision. In relatively few cases inclusion of the school social worker in the decision process was noted.

It was said by one principal that parents always ask if the child is going to continue to have problems. His response was usually that the child would continue to experience a certain level of frustration. The same principal felt that parents view the immersion program as being more academic, cutting back on areas such as environmental science, art, and physical education. He also said that teachers tend to model their behaviour on what they have experienced in school

themselves and that some people felt that French immersion teachers tend to be stricter than those in the regular program in terms of behaviour and expectations.

A few principals gave responses suggesting a wide variation, either in the number of cases referred to the principal or in the proportion of these in which a transfer takes place. There were also indications that the percentage of transfers decreases as the children progress from Kindergarten to Grade 3. One of those interviewed felt that there had been a change in the approach to transfers since the earlier years of the program:

> - Now every possible way of providing for the child within the French immersion program is tried. It the help doesn't work, then transferring out is considered. However, in some cases the parents have made up their mind to transfer the child and that is what is done.

Factors affecting the decision to transfer a student. The variety in the situations which can arise and the flexibility in the principals' handling of problems are reflected in the responses to this question. Several of the principals suggested a gradual approach:

> - There is an ongoing observation of the students from the time the child is first seen as one who is experiencing difficulties.
>
> - After consulting with those involved, the decision is sometimes made to wait and the child eventually improves and remains in the program.
>
> - Almost all students who are brought to my attention will transfer, but not always from the grade level where the first recommendation is made. This may be because the parents are initially not ready to accept the recommendation that their child needs to transfer.

One principal pointed out that teachers are accurate in identifying which child has a problem, but that it depends on the assessment whether children are transferred or not. In two cases the principals indicated that a teacher had appeared to be overly anxious to have a child transfer:

> - Once a French immersion teacher wanted the child transferred as soon as a problem arose and subtly convinced the parent and child before it came to the principal's attention that the difficulty was without remedy. Knowing those involved is important when making choices.
>
> - At the grade 2 level there was a problem which I think has been remedied. The teacher had told the parent very early in the year that the child was having a problem and that French immersion was not where the child should be. When this has already happened, the principal cannot do much to help the child in the second language class.

The second principal quoted above felt that a child should remain in Grade 2 French immersion long enough to see if there are problems with English as well as with French. If English is also difficult, the child's needs can be investigated and help given.

The need to balance several factors before coming to a decision was emphasized by one of the respondents:

> - The child's right to learn the second language needs to be protected. However, sometimes there are problems in auditory processing or in visual memory which makes a change desirable. It really depends on the parents. They have suffered and they make the decision.

Many principals indicated that, although the number of transfers tended to be greatest during Kindergarten, there was relatively little problem in making a change during that year. In most cases the decision seems to be made in the spring, so that the child can begin Grade 1 in the English program.

The problems of making a decision during the Grade 1 year were mentioned by nearly all of the respondents. If difficulties are detected in time, it seemed to be felt that the child should be moved early in the year because of the lack of English in the immersion program. The multidisciplinary conference in November allows a change to be made at that time, with consideration being given to individual needs:

> - The child is moved when he is not getting any positive feedback and his workload is inappropriate, either too much or not enough. The child is placed in an individual program where there is a realm of possibility for success. Progress is not a concern for a while.

In some cases it was pointed out that sometimes immediate action is the best approach:

> - There are always those individual cases where the stress factor is so high that immediate removal is necessary.

Maturity or developmental stage are also considered, particularly for children at the Kindergarten or Grade 1 level:

> - Maturity is a huge factor. Level of achievement, level of frustration, whether remedial assistance in French has helped, poor auditory skills and lack of attentiveness are all factors which are considered.
>
> - The individual child is considered. Not having good expressive language at age 4 or 5 is an important factor. Two children who transferred this year have multiple learning disabilities. They will be submitted for IPRC consideration and may eventually need special help.

The variety of reasons for transfer was emphasized by one principal, who said:

> - There is no correlation between intelligence and learning French. Sometimes children with high IQ's experience the feeling that the language is holding them back. Others transfer, not because of language but because of bussing or daycare problems.

EFFECTS OF THE IMMERSION PROGRAM ON THE CHILDREN: OTTAWA AND CARLETON

Parents' Views

Positive. Nearly half of the parents described an increase in French proficiency or an interest in learning the language as a positive effect of the immersion experience on their child:

- Experienced a positive situation and now enjoys French very much.
- Her ability to speak and understand French is still quite good. She has had exposure to another language.
- He excels in the core French program.
- Has good knowledge of French - takes pride in this knowledge.

About 15 per cent mentioned positive attitudes or experiences since moving to the English program, which appeared to be effects of the transfer rather than of the immersion program per se. The remainder of the respondents did not write any answers to this part of the question or responded "none".

Negative. About 60 per cent of respondents mentioned negative effects of the immersion program on their child. Among these, almost a third saw adverse effects on the child's academic progress:

- He feels he missed a year and resents it.
- She has had a very hard time catching up. Her spelling is hopeless.
- Slightly behind in English reading skills. But we removed her half way through grade 1 and we feel she will have no problems catching up. I would hate to think what might have happened if the transition came later, perhaps grade 2 or 3.

About the same proportion of the parents mentioned effects on the child's attitude, self-confidence, and self-image:

- Emotionally he suffered because he knew he was not progressing at the same rate as his classmates. Therefore, he felt insecure and his good behaviour deteriorated.
- Child feels he is "stupid" and lacks confidence as other children in his class are ahead of him in language arts.

About 10 per cent indicated that the experience had affected the child's attitude toward the French language or the immersion program:

- Still indicates he doesn't want to return to immersion program.

- He has a negative attitude towards French immersion, blaming it rather than the school program for his boredom.

Smaller groups (less than 10 per cent) mentioned unhappy experiences while in immersion or at the time of transfer; a few others mentioned deteriorating attitude towards school:

- He misses old friends at immersion school and seemed confused at first as to why he was changed; some of the children that go to French immersion think (and say) that the smart children go to French and behaviour problems and slower children go to English.

- His readiness really suffered. His self-confidence was very shaken. It has taken a good half of this year (grade 1) to get him ready for grade 1 work, and he will be continuing in grade 1 in September. From a very enthusiastic junior kindergarten child, his feeling about school deteriorated to a situation where he often did not want to go to school. He is starting to pick up now ...

Judging from the parents' comments, in most cases the negative effects did not last long:

- All negative effects, academic and emotional, appear to have been overcome.

- The first few weeks in the English program were a little trying for her but after that she was OK.

- Experience of her anger and unhappiness at the time was negative and a drain on our family's emotional resources. However, she doesn't seem to have any adverse effects now.

- I know he would have lost all self-confidence if he had stayed in immersion. I believe that, although he is a totally different child now, his experiencs in immersion will not be erased.

English Teachers' Views

Positive. Only about 40 per cent of English teachers gave a specific answer to the question about positive effects of the immersion program on their pupils, some indicating that they did not feel able to judge because they had not known the children previously. However, as did the parents, the English teachers mentioned the acquisition of French language skills as the most frequent positive effect of the program (over 20 per cent).

Negative. Nearly two thirds of the English-program teachers answered the question about negative effects of the immersion program on their transfer students. About 30 per cent of teachers mentioned the poor self-concept, lack of confidence, or sense of failure that the children had developed as a result of their immersion experience:

- Very poor self-concept - feels he failed at something very important to parents.

- In the beginning he was very timid, worried about doing the right thing in his work.

- It took a great deal of time and reinforcement to build self-confidence after her immersion experience.

About a quarter of the group of English teachers described lags in academic achievement, especially in language arts, in some cases involving the necessity to repeat a grade:

- Continues to have difficulty with language arts subjects (especially phonics).
- In spite of all the remedial assistance she has received, she is still experiencing difficulties in "letting go" of the reading skills acquired from the immersion program.
- Lag in reading and writing development of about a year.

Nearly ten per cent of respondents mentioned poor listening skills, short attention span, or inability to concentrate, while small groups (ten teachers or fewer) mentioned each of the following: social or emotional difficulties, behaviour problems, a poor attitude to learning, and negative feelings towards French. Some teachers indicated that they did not feel that they could attribute the child's difficulties to experiences in immersion, citing as factors the home situation, learning disabilities, or other difficulties not related to school program.

THE TRANSFER PROCESS

Principals of Sending Schools: Ottawa

Nearly all of the sending principals reported some contact with the receiving principal before a child transfers. One described the process as follows:

- Before the decision has actually been made the sending principal contacts the receiving principal to discover what options would be open to the child if a transfer back to the feeder school is made. The options are presented at a meeting with the parents along with other options available at the dual-track school. If the transfer occurs the teachers contact each other after the child has been in the new school about a week.

Several principals mentioned exchange of information by means of the OSR cards and the early ID files, as well as through teacher-diagnosticians, if the latter had been involved. Some principals of dual-track schools indicated that changes during the year were generally made within the same school. One said:

- In my dual-track school the child usually stays on in the English program at this school. I would not send a child back. It is hard enough to change programs without changing schools. A lot of schools keep the child.

Parents are encouraged to discuss the move with the receiving principal. In some cases the parent may wish to have the child return to the feeder school even though arrangements can be

made to transfer to the English program in the immersion school. In other cases the parent may not wish to have the child transfer even when this appears to be the best solution:

- One parent insisted that the child remain in immersion because a brother was there, even though there was a problem. The parent had to be convinced by the new principal. The question is: is it important enough to the family that a child remain in immersion to have him or her continue at this level of frustration.

Principals of Receiving Schools: Ottawa

These principals indicated that they most commonly learned that a child would be transferring to the English program when contacted by the principal of the sending school. In dual-track schools, of course, the transfer takes place within the school. If a principal is aware of problems, he or she will call to indicate that a child is not coping very well and will probably transfer; the OSR cards will follow when the decision is made. However, in a few cases the principal of the receiving school reported that a child just arrived at the school, sometimes because a decision had been made by the parents. At other times parents would visit the receiving school as soon as they felt their child was in trouble:

- Parents come to the principal's office agonizing over the decision to transfer out of French immersion. They ask to visit the classroom and stay to observe the teacher.

- Most often the parents come after their child is in trouble. They want to see the school and find out about the program. In most cases a teacher-diagnostician has done an assessment. Then the child comes to the new principal and teacher with his program pretty well determined.

Sometimes the sending school does not know that the parents are considering a transfer. If they arrive at the receiving school without prior notice, the parents are usually asked if they have discussed the move with the French immersion principal:

- Sometimes when they return to talk to him it is the first he has heard of a problem and it can be resolved.

- The principal tries to advise against being hasty and suggests talking to the sending principal. Sometimes the parents feel that they are being counselled out and have already made a definite decision; in such cases the transfer is usually made in less than a week.

The two alternative schools in the Ottawa system sometimes receive transfer students from French immersion. The principal of one pointed out that the situation is rather different for students who wish to transfer to these schools, since a child cannot usually transfer in without being accepted:

- If there is room and if it is feasible they are accepted. Children who are identified as having a learning problem go

to their own school sending area where they get the help they need from the special education or psychology department.

Most receiving principals felt that obtaining information about a child is not a problem. Report cards, the OSR file, the early identification booklet, and direct contacts with the principal and teacher of the sending school are all useful sources. Parents provide information about the child's health and their perception of why the child is transferring. Usually the information is available through direct contacts at the time of transfer or in advance, and written reports arrive several days later. In many cases additional information is available from the teacher-diagnostician or psychologist in the sending school.

English Program Teachers: Ottawa and Carleton

Contact with previous teacher. Almost half (47 per cent) of the receiving English teachers indicated that they had consulted with their principal and about a fourth (27 per cent) responded that they had discussed the child with the former immersion teacher. Approximately a third reported consulting with "other" staff members; in Carleton this included the special education resource teacher, special services team, educational consultant, and speech teacher, while in Ottawa the teacher-diagnostician, the resource withdrawal teacher, and the teacher of English to immersion students were mentioned. Consultations with parents were also mentioned by a number of teachers in both boards.

Significantly more English teachers in Ottawa than in Carleton (nearly twice as high a proportion) reported having the opportunity to discuss the incoming child with the former immersion teacher. This difference may be related to the differing proportions in the two boards of transfers moving to the same or different schools. In Ottawa at the time of this study all but two of the immersion schools were dual-track, while in Carleton more than half were French-only schools.

When responses from the two boards were combined, it was found that a higher proportion of teachers receiving children from Grade 2 or 3 immersion than of those to whose classes children from Kindergarten or Grade 1 transferred indicated that they had discussed the incoming pupil with their principal.

When asked when discussions about the transferring child had occurred, about 30 per cent of the English-progrram teachers indicated that they had taken place prior to the child's arrival. About 20 per cent responded "immediately after child's arrival" and a similar proportion replied "other" or indicated more than one occasion. Most of the teachers who did not answer this question were those who reported no discussions at all about the incoming pupil.

In nearly 40 per cent of cases, the information obtained was related to the academic performance of the child. Social or emotional characteristics (such as personality, attitude towards school, or unhappiness in immersion) were mentioned by nearly a fifth of the teachers, while about 15 per cent had been able to learn something about the child's behaviour. Somewhat

smaller groups of teachers reported that they had received information about the results of special testing or about specific problems. Several other teachers indicated that they had learned only that there had been problems or stated that information had been scanty.

Other useful information needed. One third of the teachers of regular English classes who responded indicated that it would be helpful to have more information when a child transfers to their classroom from French immersion. All responses indicated that the teachers want to know more about the child academically and socially. They want to know specifically what the problem is and why the transfer. They also want to know how the child and the parents feel about the transfer and what the expectations are of the new teacher and the new program.

In describing the information they need about academic progress, the teachers mentioned such things as the amount of English instruction the child had already had and a list of skills acquired (readiness, written language in both English and French, mathematics). In addition to the child's progress, teachers indicated that it would be helpful to know more about the program being followed in the French immersion classroom, such as the program in kindergarten and the reading and mathematics series the former teacher had used, in order to help maintain program continuity.

Teachers also mentioned wanting to know more about the child's behaviour and and the methods used to deal with it. If any special testing had been done, information on the results and the recommendations should be conveyed to the receiving school. About one in six said they wanted to have more information on why the child was not succeeding in the French program. In addition, a few teachers (4 per cent) stressed that the information about the child was needed either prior to or at the time of the transfer.

The teachers also suggested a need for information beyond that available from the school system. They want to meet the children and the parents before they enter the new classroom, to find out how the children feel about the transfer, and what expectations the family has about the new teacher, school, and program.

Placement after Transfer: Ottawa

Factors in the decision. Nearly all of the principals mentioned factors related to social maturity as being important in the decision process in Ottawa schools. The factors most often mentioned, in addition to age, were self-confidence, attitude, social development, and home background:

- The child is placed in the age-appropriate grade. If there is a problem, then extra help is arranged or the student may go to another class for certain subjects.

- The child's social development is considered primarily in determining placement. Then academic placement is decided.

- The child's attitude and approach to life seems to be a large factor. Sometimes they just need to gain confidence and then they soar ahead. One cannot predict how they will do.

- The child's attitude and type of parental support are considered as well as achievement.

- Generally the transfer is to a peer age group first at the lower academic range of the grade level. Then placement is considered after the child has been observed for a time. It is preferable for the child to start at a lower level so that any later moves are up.

The majority of the principals also mentioned the child's academic achievement or evidence of academic potential as important factors in placement in the English program. Four principals from dual-track schools made specific mention of the importance of good expressive language.

- Most of the time the reading or readiness affects the child's placement. In about half the cases mathematics is a factor.

- Mainly the academic potential is considered in determining the placement. In grade 1 whether or not the child has readiness training is a factor. If available the lower level in a split grade is used as a starting point.

Teachers' strengths are also considered:

- If a child is angry or surly a teacher would be chosen who could cope. I'm fortunate in this school to have some choice.

- The child's problem is matched with the appropriate teacher. It is recognized that there are skills the child is missing and that they should be picked up without embarrassment to the child.

It seemed to be agreed that the major placement problems occurred in Grade 1 or early in Grade 2. One principal said:

- They cannot read at all after an entire year in grade 1 French immersion. Everything hinges on reading ability.

A different point of view was expressed by another principal:

- There are those who, thinking that the child has no transferral from the grade 1 skills he has learned in French immersion, place the student in a grade 1 English class. This has helped some students and probably hurt others who might have been able to go to grade 2.

There seemed to be some variation in the policy being followed as to grade placement, although split grades, if available, were apparently used by many principals to deal with what often seemed to be a temporary state of being below the class level in reading:

- Split grades are used for flexibility when available; otherwise there is a danger of repeating.

- In one case a student came from grade 2 in French immersion in March and was placed in a grade 1 class at the father's request. He did not move on to grade 2 until September, but if he had been ready he would have been moved earlier.

Repeating a grade. The expectation that a child would need to repeat a grade differed according to the grade level at which the transfer took place. If it happened during Kindergarten, relatively few principals expected a problem, but occasionally a student needed to repeat the year in English. One principal said:

- Kindergarten and grade 1 are the crucial years. In kindergarten the decision to transfer is made at the end of the year and he either repeats the year in the English program or goes to grade 1 with his peers. If the student who repeats appears to be ahead of the group, he would be moved to grade 1 in January.

In some schools it appears to be rather likely that the child will be placed in Grade 1 of the English program rather than in Grade 2 after completing Grade 1 in French immersion. One principal indicated that in his school about half the students who transfer in Grade 1 or before January of Grade 2 will repeat a year. Others made specific comments about policy at different grade levels:

- Grade 1 level students may repeat if several months have passed. Any time during the year grade 2 students are usually placed in grade 1 with the hope that they would move on during the year.

- From grade 2 up little is done to avoid repeating. It is better that the child repeat at the primary level rather than later, as it is less traumatic. If they reach the end of grade 3 and are still struggling, they will probably have to repeat somewhere.

Other principals indicated that an attempt was made to arrange a form of continuous progress, with the hope that the child with sufficient aptitude might catch up over a two or three year period. One principal said that the only thing which would lead to a decision to have the child repeat a grade would be:

- ...if it is near the end of the year and the teacher says the child is not ready for the next grade. This happens rarely because we are on a continuing progress system.

Another said that the child would repeat the grade if he or she was "totally out of place and wallowing". However, his preference was to keep the child with the peer group and give extra help. Still another said that if the child has been struggling for a couple of years and is not improving, then in the third year repeating would be necessary.

More than one principal indicated that, when a continuous progress approach is used, it will be necessary in some cases to take four years to complete three primary grades. In one case, the principal added:

> - If the child is not able to catch up it is better to repeat the grade and build confidence. This does not happen very often.

Another said that there is no option but to put the child with the peer group since "it is the program that fails, not the child; you can't put him back."

THE TRANSITION FROM FRENCH TO ENGLISH

Steps Taken to Ease the Transition: Ottawa and Carleton

English teachers' view. About a third of the time, when the English-program teachers were asked what steps had been taken to make the transition to the English class as painless as possible for the child, they mentioned general or specific program modifications and individual help provided within the classroom. A quarter of the English teachers' responses also indicated that they had tried to give the child extra encouragement or reassurance or to make him feel especially welcome in the class. About 30 teachers reported that they had had discussions with the parents. Extra help by a resource or remedial teacher was mentioned by about seven per cent of teachers and a similar number mentioned sending work home with the child. About half of the English-program teachers reported that the parents had helped the child with the transition to the new program, most often by providing help and supervision with extra school work at home or by maintaining close contact with the school situation.

About 30 per cent of teachers mentioned other people who had provided help for the child during the transition process. In almost all cases these were specialized personnel within the school: the special education withdrawal teacher, remedial teacher, or resource unit. The speech teacher, Special Services team and parent volunteers were each mentioned by six to eight teachers.

Parents' view. From their perspective, the parents described certain steps that were taken to ease the transition for the child. The actions mentioned included the following (in decreasing order of frequency):

- Discussions with the child, involving him in the decision (15%)
- Visiting the new school or class, meeting the new staff
- Remedial work or extra help
- Having an understanding and sympathetic teacher
- Entering a flexible program situation, such as a split grade or alternative class

- Discussions between parents and school staff
- Timing of the move (e.g., end of year, Christmas or spring break)
- Having friends in the new environment
- Doing extra work at home
- Attending a summer school program (3%)

About a quarter of the parents did not answer this question or responded "none", while another 15 per cent indicated that no particular steps had been needed since the child had adapted easily or been happy to move to the English program.

When asked what had been most helpful in providing an easy transition for the child, the parents mentioned the caring attitude of school staff more often than anything else; nearly a quarter of respondents used phrases such as "understanding and caring staff" or "tremendously warm and receptive" in answering this question. Groups including nearly 10 per cent of parents mentioned discussions with the child or the extra or remedial work provided, while a somewhat smaller group mentioned having friends in the new school or class. No other action was mentioned by more than seven respondents.

The proportion of parents who suggested other ways to ease the transition to the regular English program increased from about 20 per cent for Kindergarten to 50 per cent for Grade 3, suggesting that the difficulties encountered increased with grade level. Three points were raised most often and with equal frequency (about 10 per cent of respondents in each case): early assessment of children, earlier decision making after problems are discovered and better communication.

- A better screening program for children going into the system to be turned down before entering grade 1 and not leave it so late before having to switch over.
- Had the French immersion conducted earlier testing, he could have been switched into the English program sooner. He would have benefitted much more from this.
- Earlier notification that there was a serious problem. Hearing that he was failing was a shock. All we had been told before was that he should "try harder".
- The child should meet the teacher and the parents should talk to the teacher before or within the first week as my daughter's reports didn't arrive at her new school until October.

About five per cent of the respondents suggested that improvements were needed in relations between teacher and child and another five per cent of the respondents indicated a need for extra help, such as a summer transition class, prior to entry into the regular English program.

A small number of parents made other suggestions related to helping the child to remain at the same grade level as his peers, to overcome the loss of friends and familiar surroundings, or to cope with the sense of failure.

Program Adaptation Needed

Teachers' views: Ottawa and Carleton. For each transfer student, the receiving English-program teacher was asked how much help or program adaptation was needed in ten different areas at the time of transfer. As may be seen in Table 28, reading or readiness skills and self-confidence were the two areas where the highest proportion (about 70 per cent) of children were seen as needing at least some help on entering the English class. Nearly as many students were said to need help with "emotional development" and with "ability to concentrate". Responses to this question from the English teachers in the two boards were similar.

TABLE 28

EXTENT OF HELP NEEDED ON ENTERING ENGLISH PROGRAM:
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ENGLISH-PROGRAM TEACHERS,
OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Area	Per cent indicating extent of help needed					
	Ottawa (N=40)			Carleton (N=53)		
	Great deal	Some	NR	Great deal	Some	NR
Reading or readiness skills	48	19	6	48	25	3
Self-confidence	31	36	12	36	34	4
Ability to concentrate	36	27	7	28	28	5
Emotional development	27	29	10	25	40	5
Social skills	22	29	8	18	32	4
Mathematics, number skills	20	34	10	16	34	5
Behaviour	19	19	10	17	24	5
Verbal communication	13	29	14	11	24	6
Speech	11	10	16	10	11	5
Hearing	1	1	17	3	12	5

In each board, a higher proportion of boys was seen as needing help in the areas of ability to concentrate, social skills, and behaviour. When groups from the two boards were combined, the difference between responses for boys and girls was also significant in the area of reading/ readiness skills.

For the combined group from the two boards, problems with mathematics skills and self confidence appeared more prevalent among the group of students who transferred to the English

program during the school year. More behaviour problems were reported by the teachers, however, in the group which left immersion at the end of the academic year.

Principals' views: Ottawa. Extra help is available in most schools from a variety of sources, including the classroom teacher, the special education withdrawal teacher (SEW), parent volunteers, and other students. Some parents hired tutors or gave extra help themselves. There was no specific mention by principals of extra help being given in the French immersion school prior to the transfer and, in fact, one principal mentioned that such help was not available. Special education teachers also do not appear to be readily available for the child who has transferred:

- In the past a SEW teacher was used with success but now this method of getting extra help excludes the child transferring from French immersion unless there are disabilities.

In one case the principal of a school with only an English program did not feel that the special education resources should be used for students who transferred from French immersion:

- Nothing in particular is done to avoid having a child repeat a grade. I don't see why the whole resource centre should be geared to the transferring child. Depending on the grade structure one can use split classes. Remediation can be given if available, but the classroom teacher handles most.

All of the principals agreed that the child who transfers from French immersion to English usually needs some type of extra help, and many added comments related to the differences already mentioned in adjustment problems at different grade levels:

- Kindergarten or early grade 1 children adjust faster, as not so many skills have been lost. Then self-image restores quickly as they are still "me-oriented" and not so influenced by the peer group.

- The amount of help needed varies with the amount of time the student has been in French immersion. It takes longer to remediate three years than it does to remediate four months.

Some made specific reference to academic problems:

- Mostly it is academic help, usually in the reading area because they confuse sounds. A sight reader does better in English because it is not so auditory. Math is not necessarily affected; in fact, they may be ahead.

Both the general problems of adjustment to a new situation and the possibility that the change may represent release from a stressful situation were mentioned by others:

- There is a readjustment process required for a school to school transfer, let alone a new program.

- Going to an English program does not make the child a better student, but it may relieve the stress in that the child no

longer has to concentrate so much. An anglophone in French immersion always has to listen actively, which can lead to stress and fatigue.

In addition, for some children and for their parents the problem is one of overcoming a feeling of failure:

- Most of the students who transfer here from French immersion need to strengthen their self-confidence. They feel that they have failed. Their self-image has been damaged by a lack of success.

- The child needs reassurance that he or she is not failing. Very few parents can hold back their disappointment and this is discussed with the parents. At school the attempt is made to keep the work at a level where the child has success.

A wide variety of sources of extra help was mentioned by the principals interviewed. Most often mentioned was the assistance given by the classroom teacher, frequently with the assistance of parents or volunteers:

- The first to provide extra help is most often the classroom teacher. If the problem is more severe, then the special education teacher assists. The librarian gives extra help at times as do the volunteers. The diagnostician and the principal are sometimes involved. Help is given in both the social and the academic area.

- Help is given by individualizing the program within the class; the child becomes a separate group. Sometimes the ESL teacher includes the child with her group for extra help. Parents assist too with the teacher's guidance.

The value of cross-grade groupings in helping to find an appropriate level for the child was mentioned in response to this question, as it had been earlier in the discussion of the grade placement of the child who transferred. Special education resource teachers could often be used to help, particularly when the child transferred at the Grade 1 level, but sometimes the available time was limited:

- Help from the special education teachers is needed for grade 1 transfers, but students who have been designated as having a disability have priority.

- The special education withdrawal teacher does not have extra time unless there is a disability. If a disability is discovered it will be after assessments have been completed. By this time the special education teacher's time is completely booked, so someone with less priority loses.

In larger schools many principals were able to arrange staff so that extra help was available from a variety of sources:

- Usually the child qualifies for help from the special education withdrawal teacher. There are also two special education classes in this school and when these students are

included in regular classes for some subjects, the special education teachers are freed to provide group guidance to each class and individual counselling.

The larger the school, the more flexibility there is. However, the availability of extra resources within the system varies not only from school to school but also from year to year within the same school. Volunteers under the classroom teacher's direction often help a great deal and some parents also arrange for private tutors.

There seemed to be a wide range in the proportion of children who were seen by the principals of the receiving schools as having problems. For example, one principal said:

- At this school most of the students were transferring from kindergarten to grade 1 and only one of the nine who transferred needed extra help. Most of the children come from families who are ready to devote much time and effort to help their children excel.

On the other hand other principals indicated that there were problems in a high proportion of cases; one said that for 90 per cent of the students academic or social help is needed.

Remedial help appears to be less available in English before the child transfers. Three of the principals of dual-track schools commented on this:

- There is more remedial teacher time for the English classes than for the French immersion classes - .5 and .3 respectively. The English program students receive help on a daily basis.

- Remedial reading help for children in French immersion is provided only in French, so if the child needs help in reading in English he or she has to transfer. There are two students in this school who have problems with reading in English but not in French. No help is available in this situation.

- Occasionally a teacher-aide or a volunteer provides extra help as well, but teacher-aides are available only in exceptional cases, after an IPRC has been done on the cnild.

Some principals indicated that a change seems to have occurred in the approach to transfer:

- We are resisting the attitude that if you have a problem you should drop out of French immersion. We now stay with it as long as we can.

At one school mention was made of the need to overcome dislike of French:

- A considerable amount of time is spent in overcoming dislike of French. They do not want to go to French class. The French teacher overcomes this by coming out of the classroom and playing with the children, always in French. When a child is ahead of the others in French she recognizes this and has him or her participate as a leader.

In response to the question about the length of time help is typically provided, the emphasis seemed to be on taking care of individual needs but there was a wide range in perceptions of what would be typical:

- Typically help is needed for a three or four month period.
- Most often help is needed during the year of transfer and the next year, for varying lengths of time.
- It varies from six months to forever if there is a disability.

Finally, some principals mentioned the extra load on the receiving teacher and ways in which they felt the load could be reduced:

- A reduced workload for the teachers in terms of class size would make it possible to give the amount of help these students require. The amount of help given by the special education teacher depends on how often she can come to the school. Some students seem to need extra help for four to five years.
- Receiving teachers need assistance. They already have split grades with a wide range of ability and are feeling put upon. Children who are top achievers do not drop out of French immersion. The children who transfer are those who could not make it in a fairly elite program.

One principal mentioned that it was regular procedure for the school psychologist to see the transferred students a couple of times after transfer to make certain the child was coping. If a problem required more information the psychologist of the sending school was contacted.

Completeness of the Transition and Current Status: Ottawa and Carleton

Teacher responses. The receiving English teachers were asked to indicate for their incoming transfer students whether problems remained in any of the ten areas shown in Table 28. The area felt to be a continuing problem for the largest proportion of transfers, not surprisingly, was reading or readiness skills; almost 40 per cent of the transfer group was continuing to have problems in this area. Ability to concentrate, self-confidence, and emotional development were felt to remain a problem area for about a quarter of the children, while 15 to 20 per cent still had difficulty in the areas of mathematics, social skills, and behaviour.

According to the English-program teachers, the transition from the immersion program appeared to be complete for just over three quarters of the incoming students. The proportion of children for whom the transition was felt to be complete was higher for kindergarten transfers than for those leaving immersion at the Grade 1, 2 or 3 levels. However, teacher responses to this question were similar for the groups leaving immersion in mid-year and during the summer, as well as for boys and girls.

The transition to the new program was said by the 132 teachers who answered this part of the question to have taken up to a full school year. Nearly 30 per cent of this group said adjustment had taken less than a week and a similar proportion indicated that it took four months or more. A significantly higher proportion of children who were in Kindergarten when they left immersion were said to have adjusted immediately or in a few days.

In most of the 50 cases where the transition from immersion was said to be not yet complete, the English-program teachers offered suggestions as to what more was needed. About a third of those making suggestions indicated that some form of extra help outside the classroom would be needed, with the next most frequently made recommendation pertaining to program modifications within the classroom situation. About 20 per cent of this group reported a need to repeat a grade. The most commonly mentioned non-academic need was for improvement of self-esteem and confidence, mentioned by seven teachers. Six others indicated that help was still needed with social, behaviour, or attitude problems.

Parent responses. About 90 per cent of the parents indicated that their child felt "enthusiastic" or "somewhat positive" towards school at the time questionnaires were completed. The distribution of parent responses concerning the child's attitude towards school after joining the English program was significantly different from that while in immersion. When responses for individual students were compared, it was found that about two thirds of the pupils were given a more positive rating of attitude after leaving immersion; only 7 per cent were rated as feeling less positively towards school after the program change.

About half of the parents indicated that their child was "progressing very well" academically since leaving immersion; another 30 per cent described their child's progress as "satisfactory". Fewer than 20 per cent of the parent respondent group felt their child was experiencing some or considerable difficulty in the English program. There was a significant difference between the distributions of parent responses about academic progress before and after the program change. Only 2 per cent of children were reported by parents to be achieving less well after leaving the immersion program.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND PRINCIPALS

Before the Child Enters an Immersion Program

- Have workshops for parents prior to their child's entry into French immersion.
- Provide more education for parents and teachers regarding language acquisition, to reduce unrealistic expectations.
- Give parents information on drop-out rates and the types of children for which the program is suitable.
- Allow children who are going to enter French immersion to have a trial period in the spring to see what it is like.
- Have better screening of children before they enrol.

The Immersion Program

- Have more than one teacher in the immersion classroom to avoid too much structure and only one language model.
- Provide more opportunities for children to hear and use French in natural situations.
- Emphasize language development, not reading, during the first part of the grade 1 year in French immersion.
- Provide training to French immersion teachers with respect to handling a wide range of abilities and having a less structured program.
- Provide better training for immersion teachers to permit them to deal with the combination of second language development and a good primary program.
- Develop programs for less able children in order to provide them with a useful skill in the job market later.
- Use creative programming within French immersion to give help to children who need it.
- Have principals in immersion schools who have both a high commitment to the program and a concern for the optimal development of the child.
- Use opportunities in the dual-track school to improve the core French program.
- Have more English taught in the early immersion program.
- Provide remedial help in English in the immersion school.

When a Child May Need to Transfer

- Encourage more open discussion of problems being experienced by children in immersion.
- Establish communication concerning difficulties earlier.
- Make the decision to transfer with less delay.
- Obtain more parental input prior to making the decision to transfer.
- Never make the decision to transfer alone, but collect information from as many sources as possible.
- Keep a child in French immersion only if there are signs of improvement.
- Always take a three-day processing period when parents ask for a transfer.
- Don't arrange to transfer every child for whom it is proposed.
- Don't keep a child in immersion at all costs, but provide support and remedial help quickly.
- Transfer as early as possible if it seems necessary.

- Encourage parents and children to consider re-entry to French immersion later.

The Transition Process

- Provide a transition class during the summer to take care of some of the points missed (e.g., names of letters, English phonics, etc.) and to prepare for the new milieu.
- Develop a plan to permit the child to complete the current year on time, with involvement of both teachers and parents.
- Ensure that the receiving teachers do not treat a transferred child as having failed.
- Report difficulties to the new school more effectively.
- Arrange an interview of parent and child with new teacher prior to the transfer.
- Try a buddy system, using children who have already transferred to help a newly transferred child for a week or so.
- Be flexible in scheduling and staffing to take care of the special problems of the immersion child who is in difficulty.
- Discourage transfers except at Christmas or in June, with more preparation for transition in the immersion school.
- Make allowances for some transfers when determining class size in the English program.
- Balance the populations in a dual-track school for ease of integration after transfer.

After Transfer

- Use split grades to provide flexibility in placement.
- Place the child with a teacher who will be encouraging.
- Help the child to overcome a sense of failure.
- Use a variety of methods to provide academic assistance and other forms of support.
- Provide the receiving teacher with details of the program in the sending school (amount of English instruction, reading and readiness skills acquired, type of approaches used in kindergarten or in teaching spelling in French and English, reading, mathematics, etc.)
- See that the receiving school gets the latest report card and the OSR in advance, along with results of any special testing and information about learning difficulties and behavioural problems, if any (including methods used to deal with them).
- Help parents to arrange for extra help to try to make up "lost" time, if they expect this to happen.
- Suggest to parents that they help with oral reading and language development, without undue pressure on the child.

SUMMARY

THE K-74 COHORT AT THE GRADE 10 LEVEL

Students who had entered kindergarten in 1974 in the schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education have been traced as they progressed through the grades in the two school systems. The school and grade location was monitored annually. Some of these students had entered immersion at the kindergarten level and others began the late-entry program at Grade 6 or Grade 7. Those who continued in the high school bilingual program typically took three or four courses in French in each of Grades 9 and 10. Most students in this group, known as the K-74 cohort, were in Grade 10 in the 1984-85 school year. The cumulative amount of instructional time in French for these early-entry students was, on the average, about 6000 hours and for those in the late-entry program about 3000 hours.

Several tests of French proficiency had been given to students in earlier cohorts at the Grade 8 and the Grade 10 level. Thus, in the spring of 1985 it was possible to give some of the same tests to the K-74 cohort and compare the results for the two cohorts. It was felt that the early immersion students in this cohort may not have been influenced as much by the novelty of the program as those who had been enrolled in its early years. The K-74 cohort is also a larger group than the one studied previously and perhaps more typical of later enrolment in immersion programs in terms of aptitude and motivation.

All of the bilingual-program classes at the Grade 10 level in the Ottawa and Carleton Boards were tested. Students were included in the analysis groups if they had been in early-entry immersion at least since Grade 4 or if they had experienced the full late-entry program; in addition, those included in the analyses had taken at least six courses in French at the high school level but had not had any unusual opportunity for learning French outside of school.

All of the students identified took two tests of reading and language usage. One of these was a test of reading, spelling, and grammar (Test de français) designed for Quebec francophone students at the Grade 10 level. The other was a cloze test (Test de mots à trouver) developed for use with immersion students. A sample of the bilingual program students also took a two-part speaking test. Results of a Grade 9 aptitude test were available for most of the students in the study and were used as needed to adjust scores for differences in ability.

The mean scores on the three parts of the first of the group tests fell between the 20th and 40th percentiles on Grade 10 Quebec francophone norms. There were no significant differences between the means of the total scores for the early- and late-entry groups in either board. However, it was found that the 1985 early-entry groups tended to have lower mean scores on this test than the groups tested in previous years.

Similarly, on the cloze test, there were no significant differences among the various analysis groups in 1985, although there had been such differences between early- and late-entry immersion groups in 1981. On both tests, the early-entry groups had higher scores in 1981,

while the 1985 late-entry groups had higher mean scores. It is possible that the early-entry groups have gradually become less selective as to ability or motivation.

Subsamples from the four analysis groups of students in the bilingual program took an individual speaking test administered and scored by a trained francophone tester. On the first part of this test, designed to elicit several specific structures of varying degrees of difficulty, the early-entry group in 1982 had mean scores which were significantly higher than those of the late-entry group. However, in 1985 the difference was not significant, although it was in the same directon. On the second part of the test, a measure of fluency, there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the combined early- and late-entry groups from the two boards.

The results of tests given at the Grade 10 level in 1985 and earlier, together with those given to the K-71 cohort at the Grade 12 level in 1984, suggest that differences between late-entry and early-entry students tend to become less, particularly on tests of reading and usage, as the students progress through high school. This trend may be at least in part due to a lack of sensitivity in the tests, which have in most cases not been developed specifically for the purpose of such comparisons. Moreover, there seems to be a difference in the process of self-selection or other forms of selection among the students enrolled in the early- and late-entry programs, whose clientele has also changed as larger groups of early-entry students have progressed through the system.

The students tested so far appear to have reached a commendable level of French proficiency in terms of a considerable variety of tests. The weaknesses which still remain, particularly in speaking and writing and sometimes in self-confidence, could undoubtedly be reduced by a period of intensive exposure to a French milieu, if the students choose to go in this direction. As the graduates of these programs continue their education at the post-secondary level, it will be of interest to find out in what ways they use the French proficiency they have gained at college and university, in the labour market, and also in their social and cultural activities.

FORMER IMMERSION STUDENTS AT THE GRADE 10 LEVEL

It was also possible to identify in both the Ottawa and the Carleton Board of Education former immersion students who had been in an immersion program to the end of Grade 8 but had not continued in a bilingual program at the high school level. Arrangements were made to administer to as many as possible of these students the group tests taken by the bilingual-program students. A relatively small group was actually tested and it may not be representative of the total group of former immersion students. The results show a higher mean score in each case for those who had been in early-entry immersion, the difference being statistically significant in the case of the Test de français.

When comparisons were made with another test in the same series taken in Grade 8, it was found that there was a significant difference in equivalent scores on these two tests, suggesting that the students' French proficiency had increased during the two-year period.

There was also a significant difference between the Grade 10 scores of the former immersion students and those of the students who had continued in the program, but the difference on one of the tests was no longer significant after the scores had been adjusted for differences in academic ability.

THE K-71 COHORT IN 1985

As preparation for post-secondary tracing of former immersion students, questionnaires have been given almost every spring for several years to Grade 12 and Grade 13 students who had continued in the bilingual program after early- or late-entry immersion. In 1985, responses were received from 83 per cent of the 224 bilingual-program students, giving an indication of their plans for the next academic year and a permanent address where they could be reached. This information will be useful in conducting post-secondary follow-up studies of these students.

One group of immersion students has been traced in the schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards, starting in 1971. Most of this group, known as the K-71 cohort, reached Grade 13 in the 1984-85 school year and 241 students from the original early-entry group were located. In addition, a group of late-entry students at the same grade level was traced; 256 students who had completed the program in Grades 6 to 8 in Ottawa and Carleton were found. Nearly 45 per cent of the total group had remained in a bilingual program to Grade 12 or 13.

WHEN PRIMARY STUDENTS TRANSFER

This research project has examined several aspects of the transition process from one program to the other for primary students who transfer from French immersion in the schools of the Ottawa and Carleton Boards. Through interviews with principals, questionnaires to parents, and information collected from both immersion and English-program teachers, data have been collected about the children who transferred, reasons for the change, and the transfer process itself.

The target group included 437 children who had left the immersion program from a kindergarten or primary level class between September 1983 and June 1985 and who remained in a school of the Ottawa or Carleton Board at the time of the survey late in the 1984-85 school year. The students in the target group represented about 5 per cent of the total immersion enrolment at the Kindergarten to Grade 3 level in Carleton and just over 10 per cent of that in Ottawa. The target group included somewhat more children who left immersion from Kindergarten or Grade 1 than Grade 2 or 3; in fact, one third of the group had transferred in Kindergarten. Boys outnumbered girls in the target group 53 to 47 per cent and about 40 per cent of the group had left immersion during the summer of 1984.

Questionnaires were sent to parents of the entire target group, but only to sending and receiving teachers in whose classes they had been enrolled during the current academic year. Overall, 45 per cent of parents completed questionnaires and the return rate for teachers was

about 70 per cent. Interviews were held with a total of 21 principals from Ottawa Board schools having a relatively high proportion of transfer pupils in the target group.

Children tended to be rated by their parents as active, talkative, outgoing, and independent. The parents had initally enrolled the children in French immersion because they felt that knowledge of the language would be an asset for career, social, and personal purposes. Almost all of the transfer students were reported by parents to come from homes where English was the language used. Over half of the parents described their own French proficiency as "poor".

At the time of transfer fewer than a quarter of the children were said to be making satisfactory academic progress in the program and over half appeared to have a somewhat negative attitude toward school. For nearly one child in four, difficulty in understanding French was said by parents to be a reason for leaving the program. Problems in the relationship with the immersion teacher was a reason for transfer in about a fifth of the cases. Difficulty in speaking French, emotional or behaviour problems, and lack of remedial help in immersion were each given as a reason in just over 15 per cent of the cases.

Over 90 per cent of the transfer students were said by their former immersion teachers to have had some problems in immersion. The first signs of difficulty had most often been observed within the first two months of the school year. Ability to concentrate, verbal communication skills, self-confidence, reading skills, and emotional development were each said by over 70 per cent of immersion teachers to have contributed to the decision to withdraw the child.

The decision-making process had typically taken the parents two or three months, although the actual time involved before the move ranged from a day or two to over a year. To help in making the decision, a number of parents said they would have liked clearer communication with school staff about the child's progress and earlier notification regarding problems. Some also felt a need for more general information about immersion or guidance in assessing the likelihood of their child's succeeding in the program prior to enrolment.

Nearly half of both the parents and the English teachers cited the child's acquisition of French skills as a positive effect of the immersion experience. A somewhat larger group of parents mentioned negative effects on the child, including adverse effects on academic progress, deterioration in self-confidence or attitude towards school, or negative feelings towards the language and the immersion program.

According to the Ottawa principals interviewed, problems were usually identified after discussion with parents, teachers, and sometimes other school personnel. Teachers usually were the first to bring problems to the attention of the principal, often after conversations with the parents. The nature of the child's problems, his grade level, maturity and developmental stage, the time of the year, and parent expectations were factors cited as affecting the decision to transfer.

Nearly all the principals of both sending and receiving schools reported contact with each other regarding the transferring child. Parents were encouraged to discuss the move with both sending and receiving principals. Principals reported that information about the incoming child is obtained from report cards, OSR files, or other documents, as well as through direct contact with the principal, teacher, and support staff at the sending school.

About half of the receiving English teachers indicated that they had consulted with their principal and a fourth reported discussing the incoming child with the former immersion teacher. The information obtained most often related to academic achievement, but sometimes also included data on social, emotional, or behavioural characteristics. About two thirds of the English teachers described negative effects on the pupils entering their classes, most often a sense of failure or lags in academic achievement.

In describing other information that they would have found useful, these teachers often mentioned aspects of the program previously followed, as well as specific learning or behaviour problems. A number of teachers indicated that they had not discussed the incoming pupil with any other school personnel.

In deciding on the child's placement after transfer, nearly all of the principals cited factors related to social maturity as being important, as well as achievement or evidence of academic potential. Teacher characteristics were also considered. Repeating a grade was not often required for pupils transferring during kindergarten, but was more common in Grade 1, 2 or 3. Policies regarding grade placement varied considerably, although split grades, if available, seemed to be used frequently to help children showing a temporary lag in reading skills. Other principals used a continuous progress approach.

The English teachers reported a variety of general and specific program adaptations and individual help provided within the classroom for the transferring child. As well, many stated that they had tried to give extra encouragement and reassurance and to maintain close contact with the parents.

Parents, for their part, frequently reported involving the child in the decision and providing extra help at home to assist in the adjustment to the new program. They mentioned more often than anything else the caring attitude of the school staff as being of most help in easing the transition.

The principals agreed that the child who transfers from immersion to English usually needs some type of extra help and cited the classroom teacher, special education withdrawal teacher, parent volunteers, and private tutors as sources of such help. Resources varied from school to school within the system, as did the needs of the transferring students and the length of time that special help was required.

According to the English teachers, the transition to the English program appeared to be complete for about three quarters of all the incoming pupils, with the proportion higher at the

kindergarten level. However, over a third of the transfers were seen as continuing to have problems in the area of reading or readiness skills.

In general, parents saw a significant improvement in both academic progress and attitude towards school after the child had left immersion. About 80 per cent of the parent respondents described their child's progress in the English program as very good or satisfactory, while 90 per cent said their child was enthusiastic or at least somewhat positive about school since the transfer.

Principals, teachers and parents provided a number of suggestions for improving the decision-making and transition processes for children experiencing problems in the French immersion program. Based on a variety of personal experiences, these recommendations cover possible changes in the immersion program itself, in selection procedures, in the way the decision to transfer is made, and in the means of helping the child adjust to the new program. Careful consideration of these suggestions could lead to modifications of the content and procedures of what is generally a very successful program, in order to improve the program itself and also make the transfer process less traumatic for the relatively small proportion of students for whom it is necessary.

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APPENDIX A

TIME SPENT IN FRENCH BY STUDENTS IN IMMERSION PROGRAMS IN OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

TIME SPENT IN FRENCH BY STUDENTS IN IMMERSION PROGRAMS
IN OTTAWA AND CARLETON, 1985

Grade	Early-entry				Late-entry			
	Ottawa		Carleton		Ottawa		Carleton	
	% in Fr.	Cum. Hrs.	% in Fr.	Cum. Hrs.	% in Fr.	Cum. Hrs.	% in Fr.	Cum. Hrs.
K	100	450	100	450	20	90	10	40
1	100	1350	100	1350	14	220	7	100
2	80	2070	80	2070	14	340	7	160
3	80	2790	80	2790	14	470	7	220
4	80	3510	75	3460	14	590	7	280
5	80	4230	65	4050	14	720	14	410
6	50	4680	50	4500	100	1620	14	540
7	50	5130	50	4950	50	2070	80	1260
8	50	5580	50	5400	50	2520	80	1980
9	49*	6020	46*	5810	48*	2950	47*	2400
10	49*	6460	46*	6230	48*	3380	47*	2810

* These figures represent the average number of courses taken in French by the actual groups of students in the analysis groups. To be included in these analysis groups a student needed a minimum of six such courses at the secondary level.

APPENDIX B

NORMATIVE DATA FOR TEST DE FRANÇAIS, SECONDAIRE IV, ADAPTED FROM PROVINCE OF QUEBEC FRANCOPHONE NORMS, 1975-76

NORMATIVE DATA FOR TEST DE FRANÇAIS, SECONDAIRE IV,
ADAPTED FROM PROVINCE OF QUEBEC FRANCOPHONE NORMS, 1975-76

Percentile	Raw Score		
	Paragraphes	Vocabulaire	Orthographe
98 - 99	14 - 15	15	27 - 30
95	13	14	24 - 26
90	12	13	22 - 23
85	11	12	21
80	10	11	20
70	-	10	18 - 19
60	9	-	17
50	8	9	15 - 16
40	7	8	14
30	6	7	12 - 13
20	5	6	10 - 11
10	4	5	8 - 9
5	3	3 - 4	5 - 7
1	0 - 2	0 - 2	0 - 4

APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTIONS USED FOR SCORING OF 1984 GRADE 12 FRENCH SPEAKING TEST

Rating 2: Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky, but the student manages to rephrase and continue, sometimes with inconsistent or incomplete passages. Although there is general accuracy in basic grammatical construction, errors exist. Vocabulary is adequate for basic conversations, although the limitations of vocabulary prevent precision and more detailed conversation. Pronunciation and accent, though sometimes faulty, almost never impede meaning.

Rating 3: Speech may still be somewhat uneven, with bursts of fluency ending with a groping for words or construction. Cannot sustain coherent structures in longer more complex utterances or unfamiliar situations and the ability to give precise information is limited. Some hesitation and circumlocution or rephrasing is necessary due to the limitations of vocabulary. Has control of elementary constructions quite accurately, but errors occur in the more complex ones. Pronunciation, though not perfect, is intelligible. A fair amount of relevant information is conveyed, although not always in a manner appropriate to audience and situation.

Rating 4: Speech is generally continuous, but may include some slight hesitation or stumbling. There are only a few errors of grammar and the vocabulary is generally appropriate with a fairly good range of more precise words. There are few errors or hesitations of accent and pronunciation. Most of the relevant information is conveyed, usually in an appropriate manner.

Rating 5: Speech is natural and continuous with no grammatical errors. Any pauses correspond to those that might be made by a native speaker. Vocabulary is appropriate, extended and varied. Pronunciation is excellent. All relevant information is conveyed in a manner appropriate to the situation.

APPENDIX D

INSTRUMENTS USED IN STUDY OF PRIMARY PUPILS WHO TRANSFER FROM FRENCH IMMERSION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: PRINCIPALS OF DUAL-TRACK SCHOOLS

WHEN PRIMARY STUDENTS TRANSFER OUT OF THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

1. How does it come to your attention when a child is having a problem in the French immersion classroom?

2. Who provides information in discussing the possibility of a transfer?

3. In cases that are brought to your attention, how many actually transfer? How much do grade level and time of year influence the decision to transfer?

4. If a transfer seems necessary during the school year, what time would you suggest, providing the situation allows a choice?

5. Do you think it is better to have the English class in the same school when children transfer?

6. What factors affect the child's placement after the transfer?

7. What is done to avoid repeating a whole year?

8. Where the child is transferring to the feeder school, what contact is there with the receiving school?

9. Have you found that the child typically needs some type of extra help to make the transition to the English program?

10. How often is help needed/available?

11. Who provides the extra help?

12. For how long is the extra help typically provided?

13. Recommendations.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: PRINCIPALS OF IMMERSION-ONLY SCHOOLS

WHEN PRIMARY STUDENTS TRANSFER OUT OF THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

1. How does it come to your attention when a child is having a problem in the French immersion classroom?

2. Who provides information in discussing the possibility of a transfer?

3. In cases that are brought to your attention, how many actually transfer? How much do grade level and time of year influence the decision to transfer?

4. If a transfer seems necessary during the school year, what time would you suggest, providing the situation allows a choice?

5. Do you think it is better to have the English class in the same school when children transfer?

6. What factors affect the child's placement after the transfer?

7. What is done to avoid repeating a whole year?

8. What contact is there with the receiving school?

9. Recommendations.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: PRINCIPALS OF ENGLISH SCHOOLS

WHEN PRIMARY STUDENTS TRANSFER OUT OF THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

1. When do you first learn that a student will be transferring to the English program?

2. Who provides information to the receiving school in discussing the child's placement?

3. What information is available? When is the information available?

4. If a transfer seems necessary during the school year, what time would you recommend, providing the situation allows a choice?

5. Do you think it is better to have FI and English in the same school?

6. What factors affect the child's placement after the transfer?

7. What is done to avoid repeating a whole year?

8. Have you found that the child typically needs some type of extra help to make the transition to the English program?

9. How often is help needed/available?

10. Who provides the extra help?

11. For how long is the extra help typically provided?

12. Recommendations.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE LEFT
THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM IN 1983-84

Child's name _____

Date of birth _____ Sex _____

1. Please indicate below the school attended and program followed (e.g. French immersion or English) for you child in each year. (Complete as many as apply to your child.)

Year	School	Grade	Program
1984-85	_____	____	_____
1983-84	_____	____	_____
1982-83	_____	____	_____
1981-82	_____	____	_____

2. How would you describe you child's overall academic progress in school? (Check one in each column.)

	Before transfer	Now
Progressing very well	☐	☐
Progressing satisfactorily	☐	☐
Having some difficulty	☐	☐
Having considerable difficulty	☐	☐

Comments: _____

_____

3. How would you describe your child's attitude towards school? (Check one in each column.)

	Before transfer	Now
Enthusiastic	☐	☐
Somewhat positive	☐	☐
Somewhat negative	☐	☐
Very negative	☐	☐

Comments: _____

_____

4. How would you describe your child at present in relation to these characteristics? The characteristics are shown in pairs and you are asked to check one of the boxes in each row to show where your child stands.

For example, (b) asks you to what extent your child tends to be quiet or talkative. If he or she is very or somewhat quiet, you would check one of the boxes to the left, or if he or she is somewhat or very talkative, you would check one of the boxes to the right.

	Very	Some-what		Some-what	Very	
Active	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Inactive
Quiet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Talkative
Shy, reserved	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Outgoing
Easily distracted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Concentrates well
Independent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Dependent

5. Which of the following describe your child? Check as many as apply.

- ☐ loves to read
- ☐ enjoys active games and sports
- ☐ prefers to write with left hand
- ☐ has special interest in art-related activities
- ☐ enjoys mathematical games and puzzles
- ☐ has special interest in music
- ☐ displays considerable interest in science

6. Which language is spoken most often in your home? (Check one.)

☐ English ☐ French ☐ Other (specify) _____

7. How would you describe your own level of French proficiency? (Check one for each parent, if applicable.)

Mother: ☐ Very good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor

Father: ☐ Very good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor

8. How important were each of the following factors to you in choosing a French immersion program for your child? (Check "Very important", "Somewhat important" or "Not important" for each statement.)

	Very import.	Somewhat import.	Not import.
a. My child will need French to get a good job	☐	☐	☐
b. All my child's friends were going to immersion.	☐	☐	☐
c. Knowing French will give my child opportunities for wide social experiences.	☐	☐	☐
d. I felt the extra challenge of learning a second language would be good for my child.	☐	☐	☐
e. My child was very eager to learn French.	☐	☐	☐
f. I felt my child would derive satisfaction from knowing a second language.	☐	☐	☐
g. The early grades are a good time to try out immersion.	☐	☐	☐
h. Other _____ (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

9. When did your child leave the French immersion program?

Month _____ Year _____

10. a. When did you first consider removing your child from the immersion program?

_____

b. With whom did you discuss your child's transfer from the program? (Check as many as apply.)

☐ Child ☐ Principal or vice-principal

☐ Classroom teacher ☐ School psychologist

☐ Other (specify) _____

c. What else could have been done to help you in making the decision? _____

_____

d. Are you satisfied with your decision? _____

11. Some children who have left the French immersion program have had difficulties in some of the following areas. Please indicate whether each was a problem for you child and, in addition, place a check in the right hand column beside those difficulties that were reasons for your child's leaving immersion.

	Yes	Some-what	No	Not sure	Reason for leaving
a. Bus or transportation difficulties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Family move meant changing schools	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Friends not attending immersion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Problems making friends in immersion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Problems in relationship with immersion teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. Problems in relationship with children in immersion class	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. Problems with classroom discipline	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Emotional or behaviour difficulties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. Difficulty understanding French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. Difficulty speaking French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. Difficulty reading French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. Difficulty reading English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m. Difficulty with mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n. Lack of remedial help in immersion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
o. Lack of challenge, boredom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
p. Lack of opportunity to practise French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
q. Speech difficulty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
r. Hearing problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
s. Illness or health problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
t. Upsetting family circumstances (e.g. death, separation)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. a. What steps were taken to ease the transition for your child from a French immersion to an English program?

_____

_____

b. What was most helpful? _____

_____

_____

c. Could you suggest anything else which would have been helpful?

_____

_____

13. Please describe any effects you have noticed on your child as a result of his or her immersion experience.

Positive _____

_____

Negative _____

_____

Additional Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

INFORMATION FORM FOR TEACHERS IN ENGLISH PROGRAM CLASSES

Teacher's Name _____ School _____

Name of child who transferred to your class _____

Present grade level _____ Date of entry to your class _____

Please answer the following questions about the indicated child from immersion who joined your class. Add any additional comments you wish to make on a separate piece of paper. Thank you for your cooperation.

1.a. Were there other board staff members with whom you were able to discuss the incoming child's transition to the English program?

☐ Your principal ☐ Former FI teacher

☐ School psychologist ☐ Other: specify _____

b. If yes, when did the discussion occur? ☐ Prior to child's arrival

☐ Immediately after child's arrival ☐ Other (specify) _____

c. What type of information, if any, were you able to learn? _____

_____

_____

2.a. How helpful did you find the information you obtained about the child?

☐ Not at all ☐ Somewhat helpful ☐ Very helpful

b. What additional information would have been helpful? _____

_____

_____

3.a. Approximately how many times has the child been absent since joining your class?

☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 or more

b. Reasons for absenteeism:

☐ illness ☐ travel ☐ personal family reasons

4. Where applicable, please describe any steps taken by the following people to ease the transition of this child from an immersion to an English class. Please include the type of assistance, its frequency and duration.

By you: _____

_____

By parents: _____

_____

By others (specify): _____

_____

5.a. Does the transition appear to be complete? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. If yes, how long did it take? _____

c. If no, what more can be done to help this child? _____

_____

6. At the time of transfer, how much help or program adaptation did the child need in each of the following areas? For those areas which are continuing problems, also place a check in the right hand column.

	Extent of help needed			
	None	Some	A great deal	Still a problem
speech	☐	☐	☐	☐
hearing	☐	☐	☐	☐
reading or readiness skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
verbal communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
mathematics, number skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
abilty to concentrate	☐	☐	☐	☐
self-confidence	☐	☐	☐	☐
emotional development	☐	☐	☐	☐
social skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Please describe any effects you have noticed on this child as a result of his or her immersion experience.

Positive _____

_____

Negative _____

5. Indicate how much each of the following contributed to the decision to withdraw the child from French immersion.

	Extent of contribution		
	None	Some-what	A great deal
general health	☐	☐	☐
speech	☐	☐	☐
hearing	☐	☐	☐
reading skills	☐	☐	☐
verbal communication	☐	☐	☐
abilty to concentrate	☐	☐	☐
self-confidence	☐	☐	☐
emotional development	☐	☐	☐
social skills	☐	☐	☐
background experience and information	☐	☐	☐
attitude towards French	☐	☐	☐
behaviour	☐	☐	☐
other parental concerns (specify)	☐	☐	☐

_____

6. Were there other factors which led to the child's withdrawal?

_____

_____

7. What finally led to a decision? _____

_____

8. Who participated in the decision?

☐ Parent ☐ Child ☐ Classroom teacher

☐ Principal or vice-principal ☐ School psychologist

☐ Other (specify) _____

9. What else could have been done to help this child? _____

_____

_____

INFORMATION FORM FOR TEACHERS OF FRENCH IMMERSION CLASSES

Teacher's Name _____ School _____

Name of child who transferred to the English program _____

Present grade level _____ Grade level prior to transfer _____

Date of transfer _____

Please answer the following questions about the indicated child who left your French immersion class. Add any additional comments you wish to make on a separate piece of paper. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Indicate the approximate time when the child first exhibited difficulties in your classroom. (Check one box.)

☐ Sept.-Oct. ☐ Nov.-Dec. ☐ Jan.-Feb. ☐ Mar.-Apr.

☐ May-June ☐ No difficulties in French immersion

2. Did the child receive additional help from other teachers while in your classroom? ☐ Yes ☐ No Type of help: _____

3. Rate the child's proficiency in each of the following compared to other immersion students at this grade level.

	None	A little	Fairly good	Good	Very good
a. reading or reading readiness skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. speaking French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. understanding French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.a. Approximately how many times was the child absent while in your class?

☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 or more

b. Reasons for absenteeism:

☐ illness ☐ travel ☐ personal family reasons